
Pacific youth views on health and wellbeing: a photovoice study

A thesis submitted to the University of Otago in fulfilment of the requirements
for the Bachelor of Medical Science (Hons) degree

Abstract

Preliminary findings from an ongoing study partnership between the Pacific Trust Otago and the University of Otago have reported an association between measures of wellbeing, mental health and markers of metabolic ill-health in a cohort of Pacific Youth in Dunedin. Building on these findings, this study aimed to explore health and wellbeing from a Pacific Youth perspective and identify specific challenges to achieving this.

The study methods were underpinned by the University of Otago's Pacific Research Protocols and drew inspiration from *Kakala* and *Talanoa* approaches. These were adapted to suit the needs of this study which employed the Photovoice method of data collection and a deductive thematic analytical approach.

Findings explore how existing frameworks, such as the *Fonofale* model of Pacific health, might be extended or revisited to reflect the perspective of Pacific Youth in New Zealand. In particular, this study suggested the need to acknowledge social connections as a component of health and wellbeing in and of itself, the need to recognise their evolving and dynamic perspective of culture and identity formation and their behaviours and attitudes towards food and alcohol. A proposed frangipani model is suggested as a starting point to a framework that acknowledges these findings.

We hope this study can form a basis for ongoing partnerships with the Pacific Trust Otago and the development of intervention programs to support health and wellbeing among Pacific Youth.

Key words: pacific youth, wellbeing, photovoice

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1 Introduction

A historical perspective

My Tongan

cultural advisor

tells me not to worry about them.

They are “very purist”.

I am the face of the future

language is only a skill set

To be truly Tongan

genealogy determines everything.

Blood

reigns supreme.

- from “Five Poems On Not Being a Real Tongan” (Mila, 2008 p. 13)

1.1 Background

The study of wellbeing has long been documented and dates back to ancient times with great philosophers such as Arritipus and Aristotle discussing this concept at length (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Over time, the topic of wellbeing has developed and research in this area has extended to analyse the effect one’s wellbeing has at a biological level. There is a substantial body of evidence showing that associations between wellbeing and ill-being are not merely the opposite ends of the same spectrum but that they are two distinct constructs, with wellbeing having an independent and positive effect on one’s health, particularly with regards to cardiovascular health (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012; Boylan & Ryff, 2015b; Celano, Beale, Moore, Wexler, & Huffman, 2013; Perfect & Jaramillo, 2012; Richman et al., 2005; Ryff et al., 2006; Ryff, Singer, & Love, 2004). For example, a recent American study revealed that positive affect, life

satisfaction and personal growth were correlated with a reduced risk of developing metabolic syndrome (Boylan & Ryff, 2015b).

Within this particular field there is minimal research including young and / or indigenous people; more specifically, there is currently no published work with Pacific peoples supporting this association. However, some preliminary findings from an ongoing research partnership between the University of Otago and the Pacific Trust Otago provide some early evidence for an association between wellbeing and cardiovascular health among Dunedin youth. In cohort of 80 Pacific youth, the “Metabolic Health Study of Pacific Adolescents” captured biological data and measured wellbeing and identity using a Pacific- specific measure (Manuela & Sibley, 2013). Some of the key findings were that lower triglycerides (which have been associated with a reduced risk of recurrent coronary heart disease events (Miller et al., 2008)), were associated in this study with a higher sense of Pacific cultural belonging ($r=-.22$, $p<.05$), religious centrality ($r=-.22$, $p<.05$) and group membership ($r=-.31$, $p<.01$). In addition, lower cholesterol and lower low-density lipoprotein were both associated with perceptions of higher societal wellbeing ($r=-.25$, $p<.01$ and $r=-.24$, $p<.01$ respectively) (Moors, 2015).

These findings provided a basis on which to act upon, given that Pacific youth are disproportionately represented in poor health statistics. In a joint report prepared by the Ministry of Pacific Affairs and Statistics New Zealand, it was recognised that the failure to improve the health status of Pacific youth and children will lead to perpetuated Pacific health inequalities (Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs & Statistics New Zealand, 2011)

Pacific peoples are 30% less likely to be active, more likely to have a hazardous drinking pattern than non-Pacific adults, more likely to have higher blood pressure, and more likely to be obese, with Pacific adults having the highest rates of obesity in New Zealand (Ministry of Health, 2015). The latter is of concern as obesity is a leading cause of type II diabetes, which Pacific peoples experience disproportionately have high rates of (Coppell et al., 2013), as well as other

health outcomes such as cancer and heart disease (Haynes, Pearce, & Barnett, 2008; Ministry of Health, 2016). Furthermore, studies have noted that Pacific peoples are also more likely to develop further diabetes-related complications (Robinson et al., 2006; Tomlin, Tilyard, Dawson, & Dovey, 2006) such as such as renal replacement therapy and foot amputations (Ministry of Health, 2008).

With regards to the mental health of Pacific youth, the longitudinal Youth 2000 study reported that Pacific students were more likely to report self-harm and three times as likely to have attempted suicide within the past 12 months (Fa'alili-Fidow et al., 2016) a finding that was consistent with a previous study (Helu, Robinson, S Grant, Herd, & Denny, 2009). Additional research shows a distinction between New Zealand-born Pacific youth and those born in the islands of the Pacific with the former group experiencing a higher prevalence of mental disorders (Foliaki, Kokaua, Schaaf, & Tukuitonga, 2006). Furthermore, the wider study showed that Pacific Islanders in New Zealand have the second highest rates of any anxiety disorder, any mood disorder, bipolar disorder and any substance disorder, second only to Māori (Baxter, Kokaua, Wells, McGee, & Oakley Browne, 2006). Additionally, it revealed that Pacific Islanders with mild to severe disorders had the lowest rates of presentation to mental health services, a finding that remained true regardless of sociodemographic status (Baxter et al., 2006).

Despite an increase of enrolment rates and improved access to primary health care services, a response to the snapshot of the current status of Pacific health in New Zealand, improved health outcomes for Pacific peoples have not been noted (Cumming, Mays, & Gribben, 2008). It is therefore imperative that different evidence-based avenues are explored; promoting and improving the wellbeing of Pacific peoples has the potential to address both the mental and physical health problems described above (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). A complex picture of health reflects multiple perspectives and for the research undertaken for this thesis, the main focus is to capture the perspectives young Pacific peoples in Dunedin may have about their health and wellbeing.

1.2 Research Aims

1. To identify the meanings of 'health' and 'wellbeing' from a Pacific Youth Perspective from a group of young people in Dunedin
2. To identify specific barriers of wellbeing that young Pacific peoples in Dunedin encounter
3. To identify targeted solutions for these barriers

2 Literature Review

2.1 Background: Pacific peoples in New Zealand

Pacific peoples began migrating to New Zealand in the 1940's, with migration peaking during the 60's and 70's during a time of economic prosperity and buoyancy (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2003). Since the first waves of migration, the Pacific population has become a rapidly growing demographic, with key features including, being highly urbanised, predominantly New Zealand born and youthful, with the highest prevalence of children aged 1 – 14 compared to other ethnic groups (Statistics New Zealand, 2014; Statistics New Zealand & Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010). Samoans (48.7%) remain as the biggest ethnic group within this demographic, followed by Cook Island Māori (20.9%) , Tongans (20.4%), Niueans (8.1%), Fijians, and Tokelauans (Statistics New Zealand, 2014). By 2038, it is projected that Pacific peoples will make up 10.9% of the population, compared to 7.8% in 2013 (MacPherson & Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

Furthermore, according to the 2013 census, 91.2% (274 806) of the Pacific population resided in the North Island, 37% of whom reside in the Auckland region, compared to 7.1% (21 135) across the South Island (Ministry for Pacific Peoples; Statistics New Zealand, 2014). This statistic is of particular interest as the current study is aimed to capture the views of Pacific youth in Dunedin. It shows that the South Island proportion of Pacific peoples is less than 1% of the national proportion, meaning that Pacific youth in the South Island live in an environment where they are very much the minority.

It is important to acknowledge that the term Pacific peoples does not reflect a homogenous group but rather a heterogeneous one of great diversity in culture, language and traditions as portrayed in the ethnicity statistics (Health Research Council, 2005). Throughout this dissertation, the term 'Pacific peoples' refers to this heterogeneous group. The main aim of this project is to capture the

perspective of young Pacific people living in Dunedin, New Zealand, to better understand the specific challenges to, and enablers for, their wellbeing.

2.2 Wellbeing

The World Health Organisation defined *health* as a “state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing; not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1946)”. Rogers et al further expanded this definition to include: ‘health is a state of being with physical, cultural, psychosocial, economic and spiritual attributes not simply the absence of illness (Rogers, 1995, p. 4)’.

The term *wellbeing* is not as simple to define, although attempted by many (Dodge, Daly, Huyton, & Sanders, 2012). Dodge et al proposed that wellbeing was not merely a psychological construct but a dynamic idea; a “balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced (Dodge et al., 2012, p. 230).”

Figure 2-1: Dodge et al. proposed definition of wellbeing



Source: *International Journal of Wellbeing*, volume 2, No. 3, 2012, The challenge of defining wellbeing by Dodge et al.

They used the image of a seesaw to conceptualize their definition of wellbeing. The state of one’s wellbeing as one faces psychological, social and/or physical challenges, goes up or down depending on whether one has the appropriate resources to respond. The more challenges one faces, the more resources one would require to maintain one’s balance and wellbeing. On the other hand, the more resources one has, one is better able to deal with the challenges, thus lessening their impact on ones’ wellbeing.

In the field of psychology, the study of wellbeing in all its complexities is empirically distinct from ill-being (Headey, Holmström, & Wearing, 1984). Wellbeing, as distinguished by two major schools of thought of hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing, is seen as comprising these two distinct, yet correlated constructs, (Huta & Ryan, 2010; Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002; Kopperud & Vitters, 2008).

Hedonism on one hand, was first discussed by Aristippus, a Greek Philosopher, who taught that the goal of life is to experience the maximum of pleasure with happiness. (Ryan & Deci, 2001). It is a form of subjective wellbeing (SWB), defined by life satisfaction that is influenced by either positive or negative effects (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). Since then a wealth of research has been conducted using this construct of subjective wellbeing, contributing to the development of a series of culture specific predictors of SWB (Diener, 2012). Furthermore, this body of research has significantly contributed to countries adopting measures of SWB in policy discourse (Diener, 2012, p. 94).

The concept of eudemonic wellbeing is just as ancient as hedonism. However, the eudemonic wellbeing perspective is centred around the quality of the activity itself, instead of the end-point of the activity such as happiness (Huta & Ryan, 2010). Ryff & Keyes refer to eudaimonic wellbeing as psychological wellbeing, comprised of six key principles - self-acceptance, purpose in life, personal growth, positive relationships with others, environmental mastery and autonomy (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). While most researchers acknowledged this work, Ryan & Deci proposed that although these principal factors foster eudaimonic wellbeing, they would not go as far as to accept them as the set definition for eudaimonic wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2001).

There are other psychological wellbeing constructs that have elements of both hedonism and eudaimonism. These too have been measured in the context of cardiovascular health to ascertain their effects on a biological level. These include *optimism* (Boehm, Peterson, Kivimaki, & Kubzansky, 2011; Scheier & Carver, 1985), *mental vitality* (Boehm et al., 2011; Kubzansky & Thurston, 2007;

Richman, Kubzansky, Maselko, Ackerson, & Bauer, 2009), *self-efficacy* and *resilience* (Celano et al., 2013).

Seligman extended the work on optimism to develop the field of ‘positive psychology’ as a ‘supplement to what psychology traditionally does’ (Seligman, 2010, p. 23). He developed the acronym PERMA - positive emotions, engagements, relationships, meaning and accomplishment to define this field of positive psychology (Seligman, 2010). Terms such as *flourishing* or *optimal wellbeing* have also been used to describe a person exhibiting high levels of both eudaimonic and hedonistic components of wellbeing (Huppert, 2009; Huppert & So, 2013; Keyes et al., 2002).

2.3 Wellbeing from a Pacific Perspective

In the Pacific context, health and wellbeing tends to be used interchangeably, which is most likely due to the holistic perspective Pacific peoples share. This is illustrated through the different Pacific health beliefs and service delivery models. They are conceptual frameworks developed to facilitate the improvement of Pacific health promotion, clinical practice and service delivery (Kupa, 2009; McGregor et al., 2003; Pulotu-Endemann & Tu’itahi, 2009; Seiuli, 2012; Tu’itahi, 2007).

2.3.1 Fonofale Model

The Fonofale Model (Figure 3) represents a health belief model developed by Pulotu-Endemann (2009). He used the metaphor of a Samoan fale (house) to show the inter-dependent relationship between the different contributors to one’s overall health and wellbeing. In this model, the foundation of the house represents family on which the four pillars of one’s mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing and ‘other’ components such as gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and age are established. The roof represents ‘culture’ which covers the family and all the elements of the house are surrounded by context, time and environment. The visual representation reinforces the central

roles of the family and culture on Pacific people's health and wellbeing. When one element of a fale is out of balance, it cannot stand. Similarly, a person is not whole when one of the contributing elements of health and wellbeing is out of kilter.

Figure 2-2: The Fonofale Model



Source: Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand, Pacific Health Promotion Models, Fonofale Model, <http://www.hauora.co.nz/resources/Fonofalemodel.pdf>

2.3.2 Uputāua Therapeutic Approach

Seiuli (2012, 2013) built on Pulotu-Endemann's work on the Fonofale model to develop the Uputāua Therapeutic Approach (Figure 2). He also used the metaphor of the modern Samoan meeting house or faletalimalo and expanded it to include the social and emotional wellbeing. He included the concepts of internal and external boundaries that refer to relational spaces that takes into consideration space to relate, the appropriate protocols on how to relate to another and respecting of valued relationships. These concepts highlighted the importance of nurturing and maintaining relationships in Pacific cultures that health professionals need to consider when engaging Pacific people in health programmes and research (Seiuli, 2012, p. 25).

Figure 2-3: The Uputāua Approach



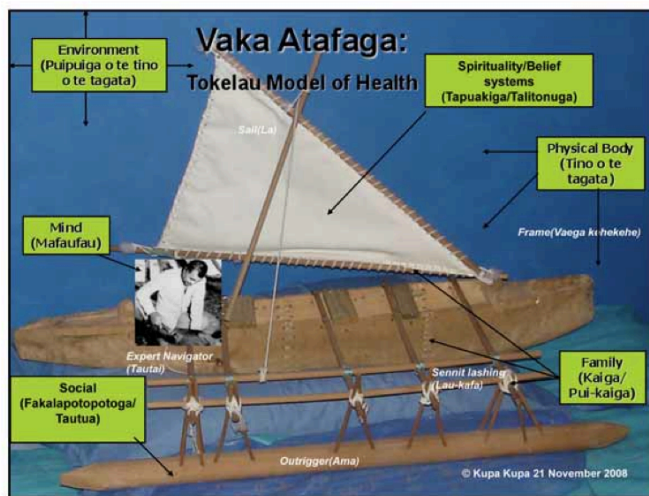
Source: New Zealand Journal of Psychology Vol. 42, No. 3, 2013, Counselling Psychology From a Samoan Perspective by Byron Seiuli.

2.3.3 Te Vaka Atafaga Model

The Te Vaka Atafaga model (figure 4) developed by Kupa (2009) provided a Tokelauan perspective of health and wellbeing. Kupa used the metaphor of the Tokelauan vaka or *paopao* to represent the six central elements of the person's total wellbeing in the context of the family relationships. Each element is intertwined and underpins Tokelauan cultural identity, values, beliefs and heritage.

- *Fenua* - Natural environment
- *Te Tino o Te Tangata*- Human physique and physical fitness
- *Mafaufau* - Conscientiousness and strength of mind
- *Inati* - the system of sharing for the benefit of the family
- *Tapuakiga / Talitonuga* - Ancient beliefs and Christianity
- *Kaiga* - Families and traditional sacred relationships between members

Figure 2-4: The Te Vaka Atafaga Model



Source: Pacific Health Dialog Vol 15, No. 1, 2009, Te Vaka Atafaga: a Tokelau Assessment Model for Supporting Holistic Mental Health Practice with Tokelau People in Aotearoa, New Zealand by Kupa Kupa

2.3.4 Fonua Model of Health

The Fonua Model defines health from a Tongan perspective (S Tu'itahi, 2007). It is consistent with a holistic view of health, common throughout the Pacific. Figure 5 is a diagrammatic representation of the model depicting the cyclic interconnected and interdependent relationships of health and wellbeing from a Tongan perspective. Tu'itahi (2009) identifies five inter-connected dimensions within an individual that equally contribute to one's health and wellbeing:

- Sino – Physical
- 'Atamai – Mental
- Laumalie – Spiritual
- Kaiga – Collective / Community
- 'Atakai – Environment (both built and natural environment)

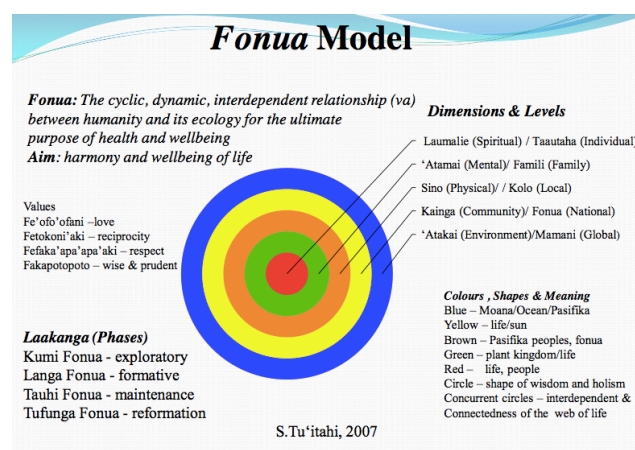
He then specifies five inter-dependent levels within society, where one can address specific issues in order to maintain a balanced sense of health and wellbeing:

- Taautaha – Individual
- Famili – Family
- Kolo – Local
- Fonua – National

- Mamani – Global

This model is underpinned by Tongan values, one of which is the concept of Tauhi vā. It translates to the ‘maintaining of the relationship’ and is essential for a harmonious balance between the different levels and dimensions. The concept of vā is also shared by other Pacific nations and it is a socio-spatial concept that can be referred to as the space that relates (Mila-Schaaf, 2006).

Figure 2-5: The Fonua Model



Source: Health Promotion Forum of New Zealand, Pacific Health Promotion Models, Fonua Model,
<http://www.hauora.co.nz/resources/FonuaaPasifikmodel.pdf>

2.3.5 Ecological Model of Native Hawaiian Wellbeing

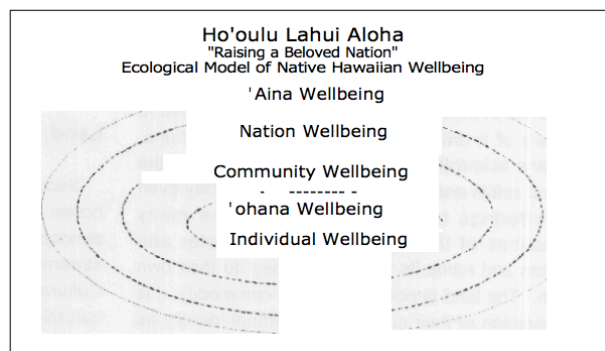
The Ecological model of Native Hawaiian Wellbeing is another ethnic-specific variation of the ecological model based on the Bronfenbrenner ecological framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). Mc Gregor et al. (2003) discuss three systems that are interdependent upon the land and natural resources ('Aina Wellbeing):

- National Wellbeing
- Community Wellbeing
- 'Ohana Wellbeing – Family / Extended Family

Similar to the Fonua model, each system is underpinned by ethnic cultural values and represents a level at which interventions and programs can be implemented in order to enhance ones' health and wellbeing. In contrast to the Fonua model,

Mc Gregor et al. use individual models to further elaborate on the National, Community and Family system. These models describe specific relationships with the land, governance/organizational structures as well as cultural, economic and social resources that are relevant to each system.

Figure 2-6: The Ecological Model of Native Hawaiian Wellbeing



Source: Pacific Heath Dialog Vol 10, No. 2, 2003, An Ecological Model of Native Hawaiian Well-being by McGregor et al.

There are other examples of Pacific models of health. However, these were developed more as frameworks to guide research protocols or the delivery of culturally sensitive mental health services for Pacific people (Agnew et al., 2004; Ava & Rubie-Davies, 2014; Fotu & Tafa, 2009; McCarthy, Shaban, & Stone, 2011; Pulotu-Endemann et al., 2007; Thaman, 1997).

Table 2.1: Pacific Models of Health and Wellbeing

Model	Metaphor	Components	Explanation/Additional Components
Fonofale (Pulotu- Endemann & Tu'itahi, 2009)	Fale – a Samona house	Foundation Roof Four Pou – pillars Physical Environment	Family Culture Spiritual, physical, mental, other Environment – Context - Time
The Uputāua Therapeutic Approach (Seiuli, 2012)	Faletalimalo – a modern Samoan meeting house	1. Roof – Ola Fa'aleagaga 2. Land – Tu ma Aganu'u Fa'asamoa 3. Foundation – Aiga Potopoto 4. Internal Boundaries – Le Va Fealoaloa'i 5. Left Frontal Post – Ola Fa'aletino 6. Right Frontal Post – Ola	1. Spirituality 2. Culture and Customs 3. Family, Kin and Relationship Network 4. Relational Space 5. Physical Wellbeing 6. Social Wellbeing 7. Psychological Wellbeing 8. Emotional Wellbeing

		Fa'aleloto	9. External boundaries
		7. Left Rear Post – Ola	
		Fa'alemaufau	10. Gifting Process
		8. Right Rear Post – Ola	11. Collaborative 'we' approach
		Fa'alelagona	12. Maintaining honour and dignity
		9. Neighbourly Boundaries –	
		Tausi Tua'oi	
		10. First Step – Meaalofa	
		11. Second Step – Loto Fa'atasia	
		12. Third Step – Mana ma le	
		Mamalu	
The Te Vaka Atafaga Model (Kupa, 2009)	"Vaka Atafaga" – a traditional Tokelauan canoe or popao	1. Fenua - Natural environment	1. Physical environment – air, land, sea
		2. Te Tino o Te Tangata- Human physique and physical fitness	2. Physical Body
		3. Mafau - Conscientiousness and strength of mind	3. Spirituality / beliefs
		4. Inati - the system of sharing for the benefit of the family	4. Social structures / organisations
		5. Tapuakiga / Talitonuga - Ancient beliefs and Christianity	5. Beliefs systems
		6. Kaiga - Families and traditional sacred relationships between members	6. Family system with values, beliefs, traditions and support
Fonua (Tu'itahi, 2007)	A set of concentric circles, which represent the different levels and dimensions of health. Very similar to the Bronfenbrenner ecological model The dimensions represent aspects contributing to an individual's sense of wellbeing whereas the different levels are identified from a societal perspective.	Levels Individual – Taautaha Family – Famili Local – Kolo National – Fonua Global – Mamani	Dimensions Spiritual – Laumalie Mental – 'Atamai Physical – Sino Community – Kainga Environment – 'Atakai
An ecological model of Native Hawaiian wellbeing	No set visual comparison. It is very similar to the Bronfenbrenner	The 'ohana/Family wellbeing	Ancestors – ancestral land and genealogy, Immediate Family – support and maintenance of family system, Future – transmission of

(McGregor et al., 2003)	ecological model showing the interconnectedness between different systems	Community wellbeing Nation Wellbeing 'Aina Wellbeing	culture Integrity of Ahupua'a, Informal networking and sharing of support & interest, Cultural, spiritual & social spaces, economic development, leadership & organization Historically constituted stable community, language/culture/spirituality, economic life, national land base, political sovereignty and governance Land / natural resources – foundation of spiritual and cultural identity
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Table 2.1 provides a summary of the Pacific health belief models that portray holistic Pacific perspectives of health and wellbeing. They all acknowledge the six core elements of family, spirituality, mental health/wellbeing, physical health/wellbeing, culture and the environment/context that underpins a balanced sense of wellbeing for Pacific people.

Although, these models of health reflect a holistic view of health for Pacific people in general, it is not clear whether they adequately reflect the perspective Pacific youth, especially New Zealand born youth. Studies looking into mental health service delivery to Pacific people in New Zealand highlighted the need to include youth perspectives.

“Pacific models of care privilege the Pacific island-born adult perspective. A number of participants argue for the need to include ‘New Zealand-born’ Pacific youth issues and perspectives within these models (Agnew et al., 2004, p. ix).”

“Research methods and theory about identity need to be constantly updated so that the youth of today and tomorrow are not penalized nor ostracized because models and assumptions about youth identity from the past continue to be prioritized (Tupuola, 2004b, p. 96).”

This view is supported by the results from a study looking at the prevalence of mental health, which revealed that Pacific Islanders born in New Zealand had a

higher prevalence and severity of mental disorders than young and old Pacific migrants (Kokaua, Schaaf, Wells, & Foliaki, 2009).

2.3.6 Pacific Identity & Wellbeing Scale - A Quantitative Measure

Significantly, the six core elements are reflected in Manuela and Sibley’s Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale, the first Pacific-specific measure that quantifies wellbeing and identity (Manuela & Sibley, 2013, 2015). The authors drew upon the qualitative literature on Pacific wellbeing and identity to develop the factors they expected to be statistically reliable.

An initial scale was developed with five components: group membership evaluation, pacific connectedness and belonging, religious centrality and embeddedness, percieved societal wellbeing, perceived familial wellbeing (Manuela & Sibley, 2013). Their revised version extended the scale to include cultural efficacy as a sixth component (Manuela & Sibley, 2015).

Figure 2-7: Construct Definitions for the Pacific Identity and Wellbeing

<i>Construct Definitions for the Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale-Revised (PIWBS-R)</i>	
Factor	Construct definition
Perceived Familial Wellbeing (PFW)	Perceived satisfaction with one's family. Indicated by satisfaction with familial relationships, respect, happiness, and security.
Perceived Societal Wellbeing (PSW)	Perceived satisfaction with NZ society. Indicated by satisfaction with support from government, local communities, and one's position in NZ society.
Group Membership Evaluation (GME)	Subjective evaluations of one's perceived membership in the Pacific group. Indicated by positive affect derived from group membership.
Pacific Connectedness and Belonging (PCB)	A sense of belonging and connections with Pacific others and the Pacific group at a general level.
Religious Centrality and Embeddedness (RCE)	The extent to which an individual feels that religion is intertwined with one's Pacific culture and identity.
Cultural Efficacy (CE)	The extent to which an individual feels they have the personal and cultural resources to act within a Pacific cultural or social context.

Source: Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, Vol 21, No 1, 2015, The Pacific Identity and Wellbeing Scale-Revised (PIWBS-R) by Manuela & Sibley

In the development of the scale, they argue that factors such as group membership evaluation were relatively generalizable cross cultures where as the religious centrality and embeddedness, perceived familial wellbeing and cultural efficacy factors were Pacific specific. As religion is closely tied with the Pacific culture, the three latter factors highlight two of the aforementioned six core elements of health and wellbeing from a Pacific perspective and warrant further explanation: family and culture.

2.4 Family

The family is an integral element in Pacific models of health. Studies have shown the importance of family support is for the wellbeing of adolescents (Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983; Vilhjalmsson, 1994; Young, Miller, Norton, & Hill, 1995). Edwards and colleagues (2003) supports this view in a study looking at wellbeing from a youth perspective. Eighty-five interviews were conducted with an equal number of representatives of Pakeha, Māori and Samoan ethnicity, all within the ages of twelve and twenty-five years. Those in the Samoan cohort all expressed the value of family, which non-negotiably took precedence in their lives. Evidence from other studies has also highlighted the role of the family as the basic unit of social organization and support mechanism (Fa'alau, 2011; Kele-Faiva, 2010; Tamasese, Peteru, Waldegrave, & Bush, 2005).

Fa'alau (2016) further investigated the strong relationships between young Pacific people and their family members through analysing communication patterns. They used the 'family section' of the Adolescent Health Research Group to identify key themes to use in interviews and focus groups, for which they recruited a cohort of 75 Samoan youth in New Zealand and 10 professionals working with Samoan youth. Findings highlighted three distinct patterns of communication that are strong predictors of wellbeing for Samoan youth or lack thereof. They defined the 'egalitarian' pattern of communication as one of regular and open communication in a safe environment, the 'situational' pattern of communication in which circumstances largely influence the openness of the dialogue, and thirdly the 'restricted/limited type' was when communication patterns were based on expectations of the youth to respect and conform. They showed that Samoan youth who were in families that employed the egalitarian pattern of communication had higher levels of wellbeing compared to those who were in families who had a situational or restricted communication pattern.

The family unit is also a space in which Pacific peoples first learn and develop a collective perspective that becomes the lens through which views are shared. In her masters and doctoral research, Tupuola looked into perspectives of diasporic

Samoan female adolescences and their views on sexuality –she found that “they defined sexuality within the confines of their family and Samoan culture (Tupuola, 2004a, p. 122).” In a different context, Schaaf looked at participant motivation in sports from a Pacific perspective. He too noted that his participants also shared a collective perspective shaped by their family and cultural background: “measured their success, self-worth and participation motivation in terms of the ‘āiga collective self. (Schaaf, 2003, p. 47).”

These studies represent a large cohort of youth of Samoan heritage and highlight the need for additional Pacific-ethnic research in this area. However, when one takes into account the previous models of health from varying Pacific cultures, these findings on the significant role of the family could also stand true for other Pacific ethnic groups.

2.5 New Zealand-Born Pacific Perspective – Acculturation

The models described above were developed to better understand the Pacific culture within the New Zealand context and environment. The environment has huge influence on how the culture is expressed and how it influences identity. Ward defines this influence as “the changes resulting from continuous first hand inter-cultural contact (Ward, 2006, p. 223).” It acknowledges that culture is not static, but continuously evolving.

Table 2.2: Acculturation Coping Strategies (Berry, 1997; Berry, Poortinga, & Pandey, 1997; Phinney, 1990)

		Maintenance of cultural integrity	
		Strong	Weak
Identification with dominant group	Strong	Acculturation Maintenance of original cultural while interacting with others on a daily basis	Assimilation No desire for cultural maintenance but seeks daily participation with other cultures
	Weak	Separation Maintenance of original culture and avoidance of interaction with others	Marginalisation No desire for cultural maintenance or contact and participation with other culture

Graves (1967) theorised that the change process occurs at two levels – firstly at the collective level which refers to the changes in the group culture that occurs after contact with the dominant culture and secondly at an individual /psychological level due to the different extent to which one chooses to engage in their respective culture. Berry (1997) suggested four key strategies to cope with the environmental challenges on maintaining cultural integrity and how cultural values and beliefs are expressed. These strategies are summarised in the *table 2*.

Recent developments in this line of research build on this acculturation framework. Lamy and colleagues (2013) argue the paradigm used in previous research focuses on the individual level and the present thus they propose another acculturation strategy that has a long term focus: ethno-cultural continuity, which they define as the “process by which ethno-cultural groups, as heterogeneous living entities, retain their uniqueness while undergoing change as they travel through time (sociohistorical contexts) and space (larger societies)”. They also argue that ethno-cultural continuity implicates three levels: the individual (cultural maintenance), the family unit (transmission) and the group (collective endurance).

They measured the levels of motivation for ethno-cultural continuity within Jewish, Māori and Chinese cohorts living in New Zealand. Results revealed that the Māori and Jewish cohorts, reflected higher levels of ethno-cultural continuity which in turn predicted increased behaviours of cultural maintenance. Several studies have provided insights into the Pacific experience of cultural maintenance in the New Zealand context through three specific perspectives: New Zealand- born, Island-born and part-Pacific (those with one non-Pacific parent). Results showed that irrespective of their heritage, cultural identity development or lack thereof played a big role in cultural maintenance (Anae, 1998; Chun, 2000; Keddell, 2006; Kele-Faiva, 2010; Mila-Schaaf, 2010; Webber, 2013).

Mila-Schaaf (2011) in her research explored the identity journeys of her participants that reflected aspects of Berry’s acculturation strategies. She used

the concept of polycultural capital to capture the narratives of her participants' identity journeys. Mila-Schaaf defined polycultural capital as "an ability to make contextually responsive strategic choices and identifications (Mila-Schaaf, 2011, p. 7)." She interviewed fourteen successful Pacific peoples, who were second-generation New Zealand born adults. Their narratives highlighted how they coped with maintaining their cultural heritage, which included expectations and pressures from the elders and family to prove they were 'real Pasifika Peoples'. Their journeys of gaining polycultural capital, was an essential part to developing their cultural identities.

Agee and Culbertson (Agee & Culbertson, 2013) interviewed a cohort of 'Afakasi (part Pacific, part European) adults and young peoples in New Zealand to ascertain the role of family in the development of their cultural identities. The results indicted trans-generational and cross-cultural tensions as emerging themes. Agee and Culbertson also highlighted cultural identity development: "their identities took shape through reflection and ascribing meaning, in response to what they were told, what they observed, and their interactions with their environments" (Agee & Culbertson, 2013, p. 61). These observations were noted by Keddell (2006) who also looked at the experiences of 'afakasi Samoans in New Zealand in a small group of young adults.

Better understandings of the Pacific cultural identity journeys in New Zealand provides important insight as to how ethnic identity and wellbeing are closely related (Lee, Yun, Yoo, & Nelson, 2010; Smith & Silva, 2011). Evidence from recent studies of Pacific people in New Zealand supports this association. A study by Zrendka and colleagues (2015), showed that both ethnic and national attachment were positively correlated with higher personal wellbeing for Pacific peoples (Zdrenka et al., 2015). Another study showed comparatively similar results with a secondary finding suggesting that the Māori and Pacific demographic were more likely to achieve a flourishing level of wellbeing than Europeans (Prendergast, Schofield, & Mackay, 2016). It is worth noting here that these studies were not focused on youth and further research is required to test these results in younger cohorts.

2.6 Summary

Pacific definitions of health and wellbeing emphasize the role of family and the collective perspective of Pacific culture warrants the use of the Pacific Wellbeing and Identity scale. As wellbeing and its association with physical health is a fairly new area of research, the use of this ethnic specific scale will significantly add to the body of work, which is lacking among indigenous and young peoples.

Moreover, as family and the Pacific culture are fundamental elements to this perspective, further research is required to address how New Zealand-Born Pacific youth are navigating such spaces and gaining polycultural capital.

Additionally as more and more generations' of Pacific families established themselves in New Zealand, regular monitoring of the challenges faced with ethno-cultural continuity is warranted to prevent issues such as language extinction.

As an underrepresented and an at-risk group, it is imperative that the views of health and wellbeing of Pacific youth are adequately documented. There is a need to develop Pacific models of health and wellbeing that acknowledges the perspective of young people and to regularly update them in light of the rapidly changing social, political and economic environments.

2.7 The current study

This project is part of an ongoing partnership between researchers at the University of Otago and The Pacific Trust Otago. The Pacific Trust Otago is a charitable organization set up to provide educational, social, health and advocacy services to Pacific peoples in Dunedin. In 2013, a study partnership between the Pacific Trust Otago and the University of Otago led to "A Metabolic Health Study of Pacific Adolescents". This study, also included a wellbeing component, because the Trust were interested in gaining a more holistic view of the health and wellbeing of their Pacific young people. To this end, the study included a wellbeing questionnaire, which comprised of a depression questionnaire (Birleson, 1981), strengths and difficulties (Goodman, Meltzer, & Bailey, 1998),

family, school and peer support and a measure of Pacific Identity and Wellbeing (Manuela & Sibley, 2013). Preliminary findings reported an association between measures of wellbeing, mental health and markers of metabolic ill-health in the cohort of Pacific Youth studied (Moors, 2015). Thus the purpose of the present study was to further extend these findings. Through indepth discussion with a group of Pacific young people, the researcher sought to:

1. To identify what health and wellbeing mean from a Pacific Youth Perspective from a group of young peoples in Dunedin
2. To identify specific barriers of wellbeing that young Pacific peoples in Dunedin encounter
3. To identify targeted solutions

In order to achieve these aims, the researcher took inspiration from the Kakala Method. In the Tongan culture, a *kakala* is a garland of fragrant flowers woven together. Professor Konai Helu-Thauman likened the making of the *kakala* to the steps followed in research (Thaman, 1997).

“There are three major processes associated with Kakala: toli, tui and luva. Toli is the collection and selection of flowers and other plant material that are required for making a kakala; this would depend not only on the occasion but also on the person(s) for whom a kakala is being made. It will also depend on the availability of the materials themselves. Tui is the making or weaving of a kakala. The time taken to do this would also depend on the complexity and intricacies of the flowers and the type of kakala being made. In Tonga, flowers are ranked according to their cultural importance with the heilala having pride of place because of the mythology associated with it. Luva is the final process and is about giving the kakala away to someone else as a sign of peace, love and respect (Fadeeva, Mochizuki, & Helu Thaman, 2010, p. 361).”

2.7.1 Toli – selection and collection

Just as one selects and collects the best flowers for the garland, so too does one need to select the right components for a successful study.

The background of this project ensured the researcher had the appropriate working partnerships with the Pacific Trust Otago and also provided the

researcher with adequate reasoning for the research question. The latter was also supported by the gaps in knowledge highlighted in the literature review, which show an absence of health and wellbeing frameworks that adequately represent the perspective of New Zealand born Pacific youth.

A group of twelve Pacific youth aged 15 – 25 were recruited to form a focus group. The recruitment processes and the ethical procedures that were adhered to, will be further elaborated in the methods section.

As engaging youth as research partners has been noted to be quite difficult (Powers & Tiffany, 2006), the researcher took inspiration from the talanoa methodology to cement the values of relationships, meaningful engagement and reciprocity outlined in the Pacific Research Protocols document. Talanoa allows participants to talk about anything as a means to allow them to feel comfortable; Vaioleti argues that talanoa creates the space and conditions for them to talk openly (Vaioleti, 2006, p. 24).

Building on the value of talanoa, the photovoice method was identified as a complimenting data collection technique for this project. It is a community based-participatory research (CBPR) approach developed by Carol Wang (2000). In photovoice studies, participants are given cameras as part of a research project and asked to take photographs of objects, people or surroundings which they are then asked to explain (Wang, Morrel-Samuels, Hutchison, Bell, & Pestronk, 2004). By implementing the photovoice method in this research project, the lead researcher can use the photos as a means to facilitate discussion, which is talanoa in practice.

Moreover, the photovoice method allows participants to become partners in research; a strategy to encourage meaningful engagement. This is also in line with the philosophy behind community based participatory research (CBPR) where participants provide knowledge of their communities and share their personal experiences in order to build community projects (Castleden & Garvin, 2008).

Education empowerment, feminist theory and documentary photography are the three theoretical underpinnings of the photo-voice method. Education empowerment developed by Paulo Freire focuses on issues that people see as central to their own personal lives and engages them in dialogue in order for them to identify common themes (Shor & Freire, 1987). Feminist theory emphasises that participants are experts and authorities over their own lives, and values diverse experiences (Foster-Fishman, Mortensen, Berkowitz, Nowell, & Lichty, 2013). Document photography tends to refer to photography used to portray snapshots of society and history in order to convey a meaningful message (Foster-Fishman et al., 2013). This theoretical basis emphasises the importance of giving the community a voice which is important to note as previous researchers engaging youth of Pacific decent identified barriers preventing their voices from being heard (Edwards et al., 2008; Kele-Faiva, 2010).

It should also be noted, that the philosophical foundation of photovoice, means that it is highly suited for involving disenfranchised populations such as those who are homeless, teen-aged mothers, immigrants, and people with HIV/AIDS (Booth & Booth, 2003; Bukowski & Buetow, 2011; Stevens, 2006). This is of particular value as Pacific youth are disproportionately represented in poor health statistics (Fa'alili-Fidow et al., 2016; Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs & Statistics New Zealand, 2011).

The photovoice method aims to achieve three goals (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 369):

1. To enable people to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns
2. To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through large and small group discussion of photographs
3. To reach policymakers

The underpinning values and the goals of the photovoice method reinforce the researchers decision to use the photovoice method for the current study.

2.7.2 Tui – weaving the strands of knowledge together

The second stage of making the garland is likened to the analytical process of a research project.

There were five discussion evenings that were audio recorded and transcribed. However due to the scope of the research project, only the first three transcripts were analysed at depth, with certain references to final two discussion evenings. This will be further elaborated in the methods section.

The researcher adopted the thematic analytical approach inspired by Braun and Clarke (2006) to analyse the transcripts, using the NVivo Software program. The detailed analysis provided the foundation required to answer the research question about what 'health' and 'wellbeing' meant to Pacific Youth in Dunedin, which is outlined in the results and discussion sections of this thesis.

2.7.3 Luva – gifting back to the Community

The final stage of gifting the garland back to the community is seen when the researcher shares with the community the insights of the current study. I, the DunedinThe also , the Dunedin Pacific communitythe wellbeing of .

3 Methods

3.1 Initial protocols

Prior to commencing the current study, a meeting was set up between the researcher and the Pacific Trust Otago team: Dr Tony Merriman, Dr Mele Taumoepeau, Dr Patrick Vakaoti, Lester Dean (Pacific Trust Chief Executive), Finau Taungapeau (Health Promotion Team Leader) and Eric Nabalagi (Pasefika Pathways Youth Co-ordinator). This meeting was essential for ensuring a good working relationship for the project and for establishing meaningful engagement, as per the “Pacific Research Protocols”. The latter was developed by the University of Otago for research that involves Pacific peoples, with twelve guiding principles that must be adhered to (Bennett et al., 2011). This will be outlined at the end of this methods section as a full explanation of the procedures followed will provide the context to understand how each principle was observed in this project.

The University of the Otago, Human Ethics Committee approved the study protocol (16/037). The Information sheets for the study outlined the research aims, clarification that their participation was entirely voluntary, details on what their participation entailed, how the data was going to be collected and used, clarification on confidentiality, re-assurance that they were free to withdraw at any stage and the contact details of the researcher, one of her supervisors Dr Mele Taumoepeau and a Pacific Trust Otago contact.

Participation in this project was compensated with refreshments provided at the two training evenings and five discussion evenings, as well as a \$20 New World Voucher at the end of each discussion evening.

Participatory consent forms were also issued and if a participant was under the age of 18, parental consent forms were issued. Upon signing these forms, the participants (or their parents) acknowledged they were fully aware of their rights (or their child’s rights) and all the procedures of the study. Two additional

consent forms were also issued in relation to the photovoice method, which will be further outlined in section 1.4.2.

3.2 Participant Recruitment

The recruitment phase commenced as ethics approval was granted. Due to the multi-session nature of the study, we wanted to ensure we had a group of committed participants who were able to attend the majority of the sessions. Firstly, in conjunction with Pacific Trust Otago, the researcher sent out letters of recruitment, which included the information sheet and consent forms, to the Pacific Community Leaders within Dunedin. Finau Taungapeau was their first point of contact due to the relationship she has already established with each of them. Together, these Community Leaders identified young leaders/emerging youth who could represent their respective Pacific nation in our focus group.

Recruitment letters as well as the information sheet and parental consent forms were then sent out to the following Dunedin High Schools: Otago Boys' High School, Otago Girls' High School, King's High School, Queen's High School and Kavanagh College. These letters were addressed to both the Principals and the Staff Pacific Liaison who worked closely with Eric Nabalgi. A follow-up email including the same information addressed to the same people was also sent to ensure the information was received. The letter outlined a request for a meeting to be set up, whereby the student researcher and Eric Nabalagi, could inform the school and potential participants about the project. In response to the letters, meetings were arranged with the following high schools: Otago Boys' High School and Kavanagh College.

Recruitment was also facilitated by the presence of the researcher at the Pacific Trust Sports Day at the Edgar Centre. This was an important step in the process as this day allowed the researcher to establish relationships, trust and confidence with potential participants through joining the netball tournament. The researcher was an active member in a netball team but was also invited by Finau to talk about the study to the wider community prior to lunch and to then

set up a sign-up table for those interested. Additionally, the researcher was also able to meet a few of the Community Leaders who were working closely with Finau. This is in line with the University of Otago's Pacific Research Protocols that states that face-to-face consultation as being critical to establishing meaningful engagement (Bennett et al., 2011). Moreover, Viaoleti posits that: "talanoa removes the distance between researcher and participant, and provides research participants with a human face they can relate to (Viaoleti, 2006, p.25)."

The researcher was also able to liaise with the Presidents of the Pacific Student Associations' within the University of the Otago to recruit participants. Potential participants were each issued the information sheet about the study as well as the participatory or parental consent forms. They were also allowed multiple opportunities to clarify any queries.

3.3 Participant Selection

To be eligible for the study, and in order to complement the quantitative data generated from the "Metabolic Health Study of Pacific Adolescents", participant inclusion criteria were:

- Of Pacific Descent
- Aged between 15 – 25. Those under the age of 18 were required to provide the researcher with the signed parental consent form.
- Available to attend 5 out of the 7 training and discussion evenings every Wednesday from 6 – 8pm.

An initial pool of participants was gathered to for two age specific focus groups through the recruitment methods previously described. However, due to differing priorities, the research team decided that one focus group with adequate representation from two specific age groups would be suitable:

- 15 – 18 year olds: high school aged youth
- 18 – 25 year olds: university/working aged youth

Furthermore, we wanted to ensure adequate ethnic representation and so we selected:

- Representatives from our major Pacific groups in New Zealand: Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands and Fiji
- Representatives from the smaller Pacific Groups in New Zealand: e.g Niue, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Kiribati.

An additional criterion was based on the participants' place of birth as this project was centred primarily on looking at the views of New Zealand born Pacific. However, when developing this group, in conjunction with the researcher, Eric Nabalagi noted the importance of being able to compare and contrast the perspectives of those born and raised in the Pacific compared with Pacific Youth born in New Zealand. We prioritised recruitment of New Zealand born pacific students but allowed for a maximum of two participants to have been born and raised in the islands.

The final selection criterion was whether or not the participants were local students. We prioritised local Pacific Youth as a means to try and identify local issues. Additionally, a major factor of favouring local students stemmed from the fact that "family" is a major aspect of wellbeing from a Pacific perspective. Being a university student living in a different city to one's own family would possibly present a view that would not allow us to fully capture the different intricacies of family interactions and the subsequent effects on the wellbeing of a young Pacific person while they attend university.

After employing such a selection processes, the final twelve participants were finalised at the second training evening and were reflected the following demographics:

Table 3.1: Participant characteristics

Ratio	Characteristics
6 : 6	Males : Females
2 : 7 : 3	Workers : University Students : High School Students

19 : 20	Males – average age : Females – average age
10 : 2	NZ-born Pacific : Pacific born Pacific
8 : 4	Local : Non Local
3	Tongans
2	Cook Islanders : Samoans : Fijians
1	Niuean : Tuvaluan : Tokelauan

Limitations around the representativeness of the group are discussed in section outlining the strengths and limitations of the study.

3.4 Data Collection

The researcher met with the focus group once a week for seven weeks in order to lead two training evenings and five discussion evenings. As talanoa allows the participants to find a space where they can freely talk, the researcher made an executive decision to commence with a prayer followed by a home cooked meal with each participant sitting around a large table. Each week one participant also volunteered to play music off his or her personal device during dinner. These arrangements both contributed to setting a comfortable feeling prior to the talks.

3.4.1 Introductions – The first training evening

The main aim of the first session was to establish a meaningful sense of engagement and a sense of trust between the researcher and participants that opened up a space where participants felt comfortable to discuss and share. After the food, the researcher introduced icebreakers that were centred on participants getting to know each other in a fun way through name games such as “bang” and introductions that included participants sharing a “funny FOB moment.” The light-hearted humour set the tone for the rest of the evening with the researcher introducing herself and the goals of the research project with a power point that included photographs and videoclips that the group of young people could relate too. The researcher ended the presentation by challenging the participants to reflect on their reasons why they chose to volunteer in the study and to think about what they wanted to gain from being involved.

A secondary aim of the first evening was to establish whether or not it was required to split the group into smaller groups based on their gender to allow for balanced discussions. However because of the cohesiveness of the group, this split was not required. It was also thought of to split the group based on their age, however due to the number of recruited high school representatives being less than expected, this was not feasible.

As a whole, this approach enabled solid relationships to be established which was vital to ensure informative discussion evenings. This was confirmed by messages that that researcher received after the first meeting, such as:

“Was solid as. I see this being a successful study, keen to chuck in my 2 cents” – Participant nine

3.4.2 The second training evening

The second training evening was centred on the photovoice method itself. The researcher briefly introduced the photovoice method to the group which lead to a discussion around the ethics around taking photos / images as co-researchers. This discussion included the notion of the power that one gains when taking photos as well as the importance of gaining consent prior to taking a photograph, especially when a person may be identifiable (Wang & Redwood-Jones, 2001). Participants were issued information sheets and consent forms to give to those who were identifiable in their photographs. If the written consent forms were not completed and handed to the researcher, the photographs were not used in the discussion evenings.

It was evident that the participants had not initially considered this aspect of the study; however, the researcher supported them to think more creatively of how they could take their photos and suggested ways on how their photos could maintain a sense of spontaneity to them. Additionally, to mitigate this barrier, the researcher probed the participants in later discussion evenings to talk about any photographs they wished to take but chose not to. However, in these discussion evenings, the participants again identified this to be the main reason

as to why certain photos were not taken, a limitation, which will also be further discussed in the strengths and limitations section.

With the aim of maintaining engagement throughout the remainder of the five discussion evenings, the researcher also worked with the group to finalise the process of taking, selecting and sending the images through to her. Together it was decided that participants could take as many photos as they wished; however the minimum number was to take one per day with the researcher sending out daily reminders each morning. After six days, they were to send all their photos to the researcher privately and include a caption for each photo and then select the two that were the most important to them to discuss with the group.

A major difference in this particular study compared to other photovoice projects was the researcher's decision to not distribute digital cameras to participants but to instead have them use their own personal device (e.g. mobile phone, iPad, iPod). This was due to the multi-session nature of the study where by each discussion evening was based around photos that participants had taken during the previous week. Allowing them to use their personal device as opposed to digital camera ensured that the process of taking and sending through photos was as easy as possible and was an essential part of maintaining the group's engagement. To ensure that the participants did not misuse this privilege as co-researchers, the value of respect was clearly outlined and understood by the participants.

It is also important to note that whether or not a participant had access to a device did not exclude them from the study, as they would have been provided with one if necessary. As it happened, those selected to be a part of the study all already had access to devices that would enable them to take photos.

3.4.3 Discussion evenings

The participants were asked to take photographs of what 'health' and 'wellbeing' meant to them. These photographs formed the basis of each discussion evening,

which was audio recorded and transcribed the following day, over a period of five weeks. Each week, the researcher would collate the photos and prepare a power point inclusive of the two that each participant had identified as the most significant. The researcher had initially used the SHOWeD technique to guide conversations but found that it led to quite a restricted discussion and did not suit the dynamics of the focus group. Again, drawing inspiration from the principles of *talanoa* that encourages “interaction without a rigid framework (Vaiote, 2006, p. 23)” the researcher proceeded to allow participants to talk to their photos and then opened the floor for any additional comments to be made. This approach led to the researcher facilitating lengthy but more balanced discussions.

The evenings started with the photographs depicting the broad topic of their interpretation of what health and wellbeing meant to them. These discussions to include what the group thought were barriers or enablers to a balanced sense of wellbeing.

It was clear that their perspectives of health and wellbeing were holistic thus researcher used the findings from the literature review to adequately prepare for each subsequent discussion evening. For example, when the participants introduced the topic of ethnic identity, due to the complexity of this particular sub theme, the researcher referred to Berry’s acculturation framework to aid participants in expressing their views (Berry, 1997).

As a point of saturation was reached after the third evening, they then naturally progressed to discussions around targeted solutions within the community with the aim of increasing levels of wellbeing within the Pacific Youth of Dunedin. The final session was more practical in the sense that the focus group had identified a “mentoring program” as a potential solution. We were fortunate enough to have Waisake Naholo attend our evening as being an All Black of Pacific heritage; he is a role model to our young people. He shared his experiences of adapting the New Zealand life style and touched on the topics of *identity* and *fitting in* – both of which we had discussed at length as a group. The researcher also allowed for

short breaks part way through the discussions if participants were notably losing interest. It should be worth noting that the latter only occurred during the final two sessions.

After the final session, participants were asked to sign a third consent form: “the photograph release form”. They were reminded that they had the right to choose not to sign the form and that even they did, they could withdraw this decision at any stage. Upon signing this consent form, participants agreed to their photos being published or used in a public forum where they would not be identified as the authors. Parental consent was required if the participant was under the age of 18.

3.5 Thematic Analysis

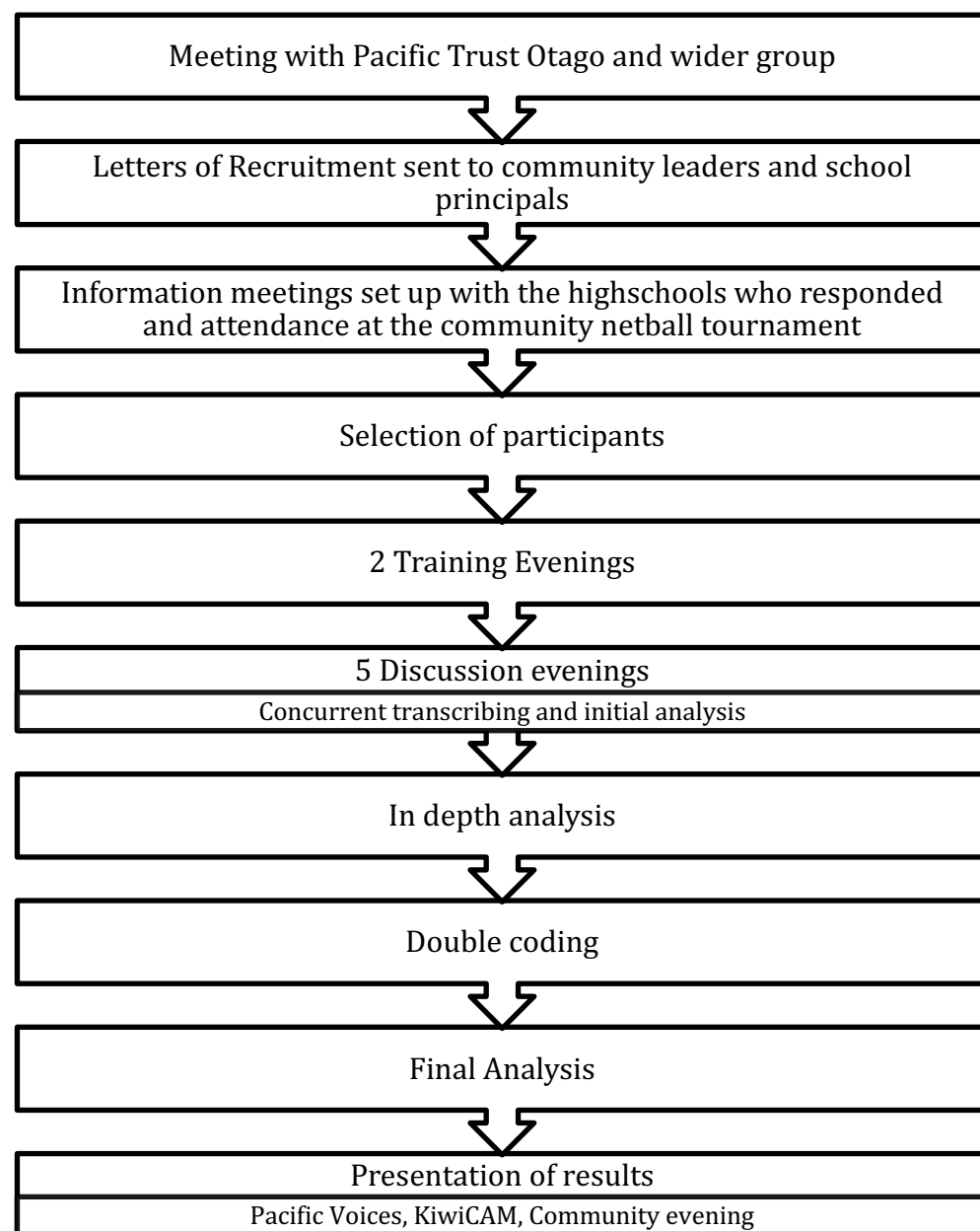
The overarching aim of the study, which was to capture the views of Pacific youth on what health and wellbeing meant to them, required an analysis approach that would allow a rich description of the data collected. Thus as the data was being collected and analyzed concurrently, the researcher took a deductive stance in the initial phases of the analyses. In the latter stages of in-depth data analysis, the researcher then took an inductive/realist stance during the coding process in order to explicitly identify themes that were grounded in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the case of this study, transcripts from the first three discussion evenings were analyzed at depth. As the latter two were intervention specific, the researcher made certain references to key ideas from the final two evenings support the analysis.

Focus group interviews were transcribed concurrently with data collection, during which the initial coding of the data commenced. The researcher adopted key concepts from the Fonofale model of health to categorize the codes. After the discussion evenings were all complete, the researcher further defined each code in order to identify potential themes. At this point, the data set was also double

coded by another member of the research team to test for consistency. It became clear that there were additional emerging themes that were not being adequately captured within the Fonofale framework. At this stage, and, with further reference to the literature and constant comparison between the codes, new categories were identified. After discussion with the wider research team three core themes were identified which underpinned the named categories.

Figure 3-1: Timeline of the research project



3.6 Pacific Research Protocols at the University of Otago

The twelve guiding principles as outlined in the “Pacific Research Protocols” and how they were applied to the current study are as follows:

1. Maximising benefits to humans
 - a. The researcher made every effort to maximise the benefits of this research project to those involved and their communities. Several means were established so as to avoid harm to them.
2. Relationships
 - a. Through working closely with the Pacific Trust Otago, the researcher met with and then recruited interested participants. Once the focus group was established, the researcher designed the first evening to develop and cultivate principled relationships, which were maintained throughout the study.
3. Respect
 - a. This was a core value to both the researcher and those within the focus group. It was acknowledged in the first evening and at no point was this value questioned.
 - b. Due to the nature of the photo-voice method and the participants becoming -researchers as they collected their photos, this value was reiterated and once again it was not put into question.
4. Cultural competency
 - a. The researcher worked closely with the Pacific Trust Otago before liaising with the Pacific Community Leaders respecting their position as elders and honouring their requests.
 - b. The researcher being a New Zealand born Pacific young person who is not fluent in her Pacific languages but is instead fluent in French language, acknowledged her multi-cultural view of the world. The latter was a strength in this project due the bi-cultural identity the participants also shared. When necessary, the researcher sought out the correct interpretation of pacific words or concepts that was raised at any stage of the research project.

5. Meaningful engagement

- a. At every stage, face-to-face consultation was established. When necessary, consultation was with a representative from the Pacific Trust Otago and / or the researchers supervisor.
- b. When the project commenced, the discussion evenings were planned for the third week of the project to ensure that the researcher had first developed meaningful relationships based on trust with the participants.

6. Reciprocity

- a. The photo-voice method is a community based-participatory research method whereby the participants are acknowledged as research partners. The council of young people were not discarded for their age but were deeply valued and encouraged to share their views, an action which is not always possible to do so in certain Pacific spaces (Mila-Schaaf, 2011).

7. Utility

- a. A direct outcome of this study is to inform parties such as the Pacific Trust Otago, the University of Otago and other researchers engaging Pacific peoples on best practice methods around engaging Pacific young people.
- b. This study also aims to identify specific barriers to the wellbeing of young Pacific people in Dunedin as well as targeted solutions on how to overcome these barriers that the participants themselves identified. In aiming to improve their sense of wellbeing, there is a two fold positive effect which can occur directly at a biological level and then also indirectly through improved lifestyle factors (Boehm & Kubzansky, 2012; Boylan & Ryff, 2015a; Oreskovic & Goodman, 2013).

8. Rights

- a. Each participant was given the right to an informed decision on whether or not they wished to participate. The researcher also ensured that each participant was aware of possibility to withdraw from the study at any stage. Moreover, if they were not able to

make every discussion evening participants were not disadvantaged and the researcher ensured that they were caught up to speed if they were absent.

- b. At the first evening, the first point was to ensure that each participant was well informed about what was required. The researcher also allowed a time for the participants to clarify any queries.
- c. Confidentiality was also stressed at both the training evenings to ensure a sense of trust was established.

9. Balance

- a. "Balance is critical when practicing the ethical principles of Pacific research. It applies to the mutuality of power, control and involvement (Bennett et al., 2011, p. 13)."
- b. As the project commenced, a meeting between the research team from the University of Otago and the Pacific Trust Otago was established. From this meeting the required working relationships were introduced and a shared partnership was maintained throughout the project.
- c. As the participants were regarded as research partners, their opinions on aspects of the data collection process were taken into account. This is explained in further detail in a later section.

10. Protection

- a. As research partners, the participants knowledge based on their personal experience and expertise was acknowledged as such
- b. Respect and confidentiality were established, as core group values to ensure that what was shared within the group did not lead to harm outside of the discussion evenings.
- c. When sharing the transcripts with the Pacific Trust, pseudonyms were edited into them.

11. Capacity and capability building

- a. "Capacity and capability building is critical to improving Pacific knowledge outcomes through research (Bennett et al., 2011) p13"

- b. This project supported capability development from a staff perspective as it allowed Dr Mele Taumoepeau (Department of Psychology), Dr Ros Richards (Department of Social) and Dr Patrick Vakaoti (Department of Soc) an opportunity to collaborate for the first time.

12. Participation

- a. Both the researcher and her supervisors were of Pacific descent.

4 Strengths and Limitations of the study

A strength of the study stems from the theoretical underpinnings of the photovoice method itself, which positioned the participants as the 'experts' in what wellbeing is; the conversations started from their understanding of wellbeing. Without imposing other ideas of wellbeing, it was a deliberately empowering technique. The approach was popular with participants, and a degree of comfort with the approach was indicated by their choice to contribute images of quite personal spaces and experiences such as home environments and friends. The photos were a valuable tool for facilitating discussion, not just for the person who took the picture, but prompting wider conversation. These conversations between participants were a dynamic element of the transcripts, which is why several were included in full in the results section.

A notable limitation however was the requirement for participants to adhere to the Photovoice ethics. Having to ask for consent was the main reason why participants chose not to take certain photographs to express their thoughts. To mitigate this pitfall, the researcher did ensure that she asked participants to explain situations where they chose not to take a photo to enable different ideas to be discussed. Additionally, the photos taken prompted different experiences to be shared.

Another strength of the study was the position of the researcher as an 'insider'. The researcher was of Pacific decent, non-fluent in her Pacific language and who grew up in both New Zealand and New Caledonia. Her multi-cultural perspective and her age helped participants to feel more comfortable to share their thoughts. A limitation of this perspective however was highlighted in sections where further probing was not pursued as the researcher had a mutual understanding of what the participant was sharing. In these situations the researcher referred to the literature to better illustrate a better understanding of what was shared for the reader.

Another strength of the study's methodology was how the concept of talanoa was implemented by beginning each session with a meal and an icebreaker. This time set a comfortable tone for each evening and engaged each member of the group prior to commencing conversations around each photo.

With regards to recruitment, the working partnership with the Pacific Trust Otago was yet another strength. The relationships that Eric Nabalagi and Finau Taungapeau had with the members of the community provided the researcher with opportunities to build meaningful relationships with those involved. It was out of this partnership that there were initially five high school representatives and five university-aged representatives. However, due to the length of the project the number of high school representatives dropped. Respecting their decision, further efforts to recruit were employed, however, the final make up of the group favoured a university perspective. The high-school representatives were not shy and their personalities suited the dynamics of the group. They were comfortable asking the older representatives for their perspectives on an issue. However, it would have been more favourable to have at least two more high school representatives.

Finally, the views from this particular group are not generalizable to the Pacific youth across New Zealand. As noted in the introduction there is a relatively low percentage of Pacific peoples residing in Dunedin in a contrast to the areas of the North Island. This does, however, provide a unique perspective of the experience of living in areas where there may be fewer Pacific specific services (for both health and education), and how to support well-being in spaces where the Pacific community is perhaps less visible and acknowledged by the institutions which young people engage with.

5 Results

The research aims guided the analysis in which the following three major themes were outlined by the focus group:

1. Social connections are a major component to the health and wellbeing of this group of young Pacific peoples.
2. Cultural factors to their health and wellbeing are dynamic and evolving.
3. Attitudes and behaviours towards food and alcohol are an important factor to consider when addressing health and wellbeing

However, due to the holistic nature of wellbeing for Pacific peoples, as reviewed in the introduction, the photovoice process allowed for a larger research scope, and was reflected in the range of topics discussed across the five evenings. Within these main ideas, topics such as family, culture, context, spirituality, and identity journeys are all interwoven. Additionally, within these, participants identified specific challenges to their sense of wellbeing. Finally, the participants provided ideas for potential solutions that could be implemented to overcome the challenges identified.

5.1 Surround yourself with people

A recurring theme of the photographs taken and the captions associated with each photo was how social connections were a key component of their definitions of health and wellbeing; the personal narratives of each participant also highlight this finding. How they view their personal health and wellbeing is heavily influenced by their relationships with others around them – a social and collective perspective inherent in the Pacific culture.

Key social connections begin with their immediate family members, but also extend to include their wider family and friends. Furthermore, this young group also highlighted the importance of their social interactions within the school/university and social media spaces and discussed how they influence what health and wellbeing means to them.

5.1.1 Family – where it all begins

Just like the foundation of a house acts as the main supporting structure (Pulotu-Endemann & Tu’itahi, 2009)., the family unit is a key building block to the definition of health and wellbeing for this young group of Pacific peoples. Their families provide them with the sense of constant support as well as a deep-rooted sense of gratitude and core cultural values, all of which contribute to a perspective that is not just centred on them as individuals.

Just having someone there for you

Figure 5-1: J chilling with the sister



The younger participants who are still at home describe their dependence on their family members.

But the point is, this is my immediate family, so my parents and all my siblings. And I think they're just such a huge part of my health and wellbeing because at the end of the day, it's them who've got my back for anything. Regardless, regardless if it's just for food, money or just advice. Like it's always them, they'll always be there. (Participant one)

In contrast, the older participants describe how they are stepping into their own. However, regardless of their age and what stage they were at in their own personal lives, each member had a strong belief that their family was, is and will remain an integral component of support to their health and wellbeing.

Conversation extract 1

Participant twelve: uh, maybe just, I feel like I don't, well I don't think about them because I don't need to rely on them anymore. Maybe that's why I don't include them in stuff because you know, I'm 25, I'm my own person, I'm my own man so like I don't need them anymore as such. When I was student, you know not so much but you know definitely yeah I kinda feel, you kinda grow as you mature, you kind a grow out of your parent's kinda shadow and you kinda, you become your own person and yeah it's probably, probably why yeah. Just don't really need them all, like that for support. But they're always there for you know.

Participant five: I think I had one which was like a text, which was between me and my nana but that was more just like it's nice to hear from her. I think family, I think for me they're more like because I know they're always there, then that's cool, they're always there but then like I'm living by myself, so I need to focus on myself if that makes sense? Um, yeah, like I know they're always there and I know that like we love each other blah blah blah but like yeah, yeah, I'm like older now, I'm just gonna live my own, well not my own life but like yeah my own life, just like not so connected to them any more if that makes sense, not so reliant on them anymore.

Facilitator: wait would, so, even though you're not as reliant on them, would you still say they're important to your wellbeing and your health?

Participant twelve: yeah definitely

Participant five: yeah

Participant twelve: oh yeah, for support and just the... I don't know, family dinners and what not. Just going back just to catch up, just to catch up, yeah definitely.

This idea of knowing they always have their family there to support them may be simple but it provides them with a great sense of security and is not to be underestimated.

Learning about core cultural values

Figure 5-2: My culture plays a huge role in my life



The family unit is the first place where one can learn about their cultural heritage. It is important to note that each Island of the Pacific has its own individual culture, unique in its own right. However, with that said, despite different cultures represented in the group, the values that underpin their cultures in the Pacific region overlap. It was evident throughout the discussion evenings that each participant strongly identified with core Pacific cultural values, one of which was the idea of respect. This included respect for their grandparents and elders, parents as well as for friends and family members closer in age.

Respect for your elders, that's probably the big thing...respect. (Participant twelve)

Conversation extract 2

Participant eight: I think you respect your grandparents a little bit more maybe just um because I guess they've taught your parents how to live life and now they are also helping you to live your life type of thing as well and they've I guess the saying like you get wiser with age, they've experienced most things that we haven't experienced just yet but will go on to experience. So like they know, they know what they are talking about in some aspects of things.

Participant five: and I think that because they're in charge of your parents, and your parents are in charge of you so your kinda like (giggles)

Participant seven: yeah like the hierarchy system

Participant three: they override what your parents say

Conversation extract 3

Participant five: I think that also like, probably some like things that shape your personality, way of thinking like I'm not, I don't really know but like Faka'apa'apa like I'm not really too sure what that means.

Participant seven: Respect

Participant five: But I just know it's like respect between brother-sister, boy-cousin girl-cousin. Like that's a real big thing, even though we're not that Tongan like that's what our parents taught us and like, we always have to respect our brothers and they have to respect us and stuff like that and so I think that there are parts of Pacific culture and stuff like that, that affects who you are as a person.

Other values emphasised by the group included the concept of family that a Pacific person shares with their peers and fellow Pacific islanders, the beauty of warm hospitality, a deep understanding to share, and the sense of community during times of trouble or sorrow. Each of these values heavily influence their social interactions and clearly portray the collective perspective of the Pacific culture.

Sacrifices made to better the family

Furthermore, in the context of family, participants were aware of both the motives and struggles behind their family's move to New Zealand. This knowledge of their family history, combined with stories of the simple life in the Islands, contribute to their perspective of wellbeing with regards to having an attitude of gratitude, which is more than just contentment.

So the cross is my grandad and then the other one is my grandma both in different sides. The other two are still alive, um, I feel like if it weren't for these, this generation like we

wouldn't be where we are now. Like everything, like right now, all of us standing there, like none of that would have been possible without them starting it. First raising kids which were our parents to have the right set of mind to know that Tonga is not gonna be good enough to, oh not good enough but like we can do better than that, not trying to like say that Tonga is not good but I'm just saying like NZ has better opportunity for us and I feel like they sacrifice so much and they work so hard and I feel like that is just the beginning of where we are now. (Participant one)

Conversation extract 4

Participant five: um like, I think as a whole, islanders are just happy with what they have. And like they are always just happy. They're not even worried just cause they're not really trying to seek for something they can't have. Like if they have this much money, like that's it, they're like they deal with it kinda of thing and then its just like, I don't know, they just seem happier. If that makes sense.

Facilitator: What about you guys? Do you guys have this feeling of contentment?

Participant three: Grateful.

Participant nine: yeah – Grateful.

Participant three: like what he mentioned last week, you have roof over your head, you're pretty much in a house. Pretty much like the same thing, you're grateful that you're in a house. So I don't feel content, it's more like I feel grateful I actually have something cause there's probably a few people out there that don't have what I have.

Facilitator: And where does this sense of gratitude stem from?

Participant four: I feel like it stems from your better off then your family in the islands. You know I'm sure a lot of us, especially. Because I mean, um, if you think about it, everyone's parent's majority islanders have moved to this, to New Zealand, or anywhere outside of their own home country for a better living. And so, even your parents will even remind you, oh finish that, you know that food that you got because there's your cousin or your family at home that don't, people at home in samoa who would kill to have what you have. Or there's the um, you should be grateful because, they'll pull the "oh because we didn't have this when we were younger you know." Just the whole idea that you're better off than where they came from and from your family back home and so I think that's were a lot of our gratitude as Islanders come from because of just our past and ancestry. Yeah.

Moreover, knowing the sacrifices required to make the move exemplifies the collective perspective in which one will put their personal needs aside for the sake of others.

The caption is learnin (was supposed to be learning but obviously typo there) with like-minded people and just sort of just, embodies the Pacific culture and the Pacific way of life. Cause we're a real, a collective group, you worry about other people as much as you worry about yourself - if not maybe more. (Participant eleven)

This feature that can have both positive and negative consequences as will be further discussed in the following section.

5.1.2 Challenges in the family unit; a double-edged sword.

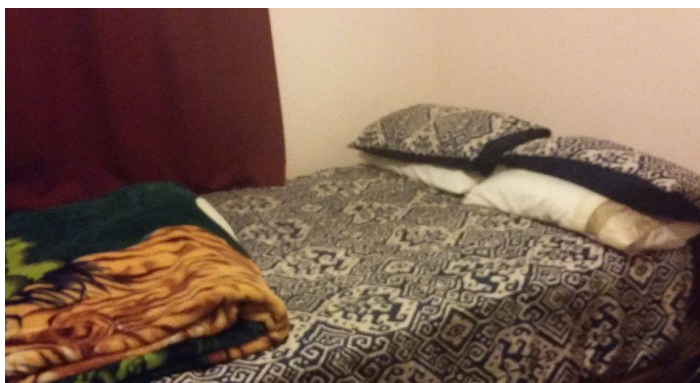
In the Pacific context, family can be like a double-edged sword. This was first illustrated as the group talked about their individual quests for independence or lack thereof, and secondly by the lack of spaces for dialogue at home, especially with regards to important life decisions.

A search for Independence

As one matures, one becomes more independent; but for this young Pacific group, this idea was not as clear. Their narratives portray the difficulties of being an individual in a collectivistic space. Whether they were at high school, university or even as a young Pacific parent, the relationship with their respective parents at home still resembled one of hierarchy, with “family rules”.

Yeah my mum like mainly, cause she's the head of the house you know, no arguments there she's like the boss of the whole family, like even her sister's as well, Um, she tries to control me on how to take care of my daughter but then I have to remind her that you know, I am New Zealand born, you know, I have my rights, you know this is my child you know. (Participant six)

Figure 5-3: Sleep is also very healthy and important as a young pacific person



Whereas when I'm in my own bed and I feel like that's my, like I can do whatever I want, I'm comfortable, it's in my own space...oh yeah, like you know growing up as a Pacific Islander you've always got jobs to do, you know? Your parents are always telling you to do this, do that, but once you're in your own space, you can do whatever you want...well not whatever you want but you know? (Participant seven)

But I feel like if I moved out, I can feel like I was in charge of like myself rather than like my mum telling me oh, you gotta clean your room you gotta clean your bed blah blah blah all that stuff but this time you have to tell yourself like use common sense, you have to do this. You know you have to do this because you don't have your parents around to tell you do that kind of stuff. I feel like moving out you have that new big step and like taking initiative and doing all that stuff on your own but I haven't got that yet and probably won't for a while so...just stay home so yeah....(Participant two)

Conversation Extract 5

Facilitator: I guess it's sort of like a general comment you can make, as a young person being a home like you're under your parents rule and as soon as come to uni there's a new degree of freedom. Do you, do you think that as a Pacific Islander, there's more restrictions? (Group response: yeah) And if so, what and why?...

Participant twelve: Just family rules....family rules I reckon, that's one thing I don't like. I enjoyed when I moved out of home cause I'm not under Dad's roof – like it's all fine, it's fine living there but it's still his house and so like once I left then I could, I'm free to you know, do what I want, have more freedom. Cause like, you understand your family; you know what you can and you can't do. And then once you leave, then I feel like there's more, um, freedom to do as I please and not having anyone to answer to really...But then I go back home so

yeah...it's one of the reasons why I like to leave, I like to live away from home cause then I can still do what I want and yeah.

They also highlight the authoritarian style of parenting that most Pacific parents adopt which contributes to this reality that contrasts with non-Pacific peoples in New Zealand. For them, finding their own space at home, (ie. the bedroom), or being able to physically distance oneself from the family environment provided the opportunity to gain a sense of what it means for them to become their own person and be independent, even though the dynamics at home remain constant.

Lack of spaces for dialogue – “Shut up”

Figure 5-4: Do what you are passionate about



Another challenge for this young group, which also contributes to this lack of independence, is the lack of space for an open dialogue with their parents. Within the group, members shared about the expectation they felt to just listen and follow.

When we're at school, we're encouraged to say what we like, say what's on our mind, stick up for ourselves, but we come home we're told (Participant one: shut up, just shut up) just to listen and do what you're told. (Participant seven).

I think that also ties into, like I think you were asking about why it's more easy to talk on Facebook than it is out loud, cause like when you're at home, they tell you like you can't say that, don't do this cause its just the way you were taught you know like listen to them and blah blah blah (Participant five)

Like for me if I ever wanted to talk to my parents about things, I just want them to listen to me. Take in what I've said to them and tell me what they see, whereas if I actually talk to them, they'll probably say, your like that because of this, this, this or like that's your problem, you know how to fix it kinda thing (Participant nine)

This idea of a one sided conversation was then accentuated by the fact that the decisions around university or career options were difficult to navigate; there was a sentiment that if their desired pathways did not align with their parents expectations, the default response would be to hide it from them.

I think with like the um, hiding it thing. I think its a lot, like I remember in high school I used to hide a lot of things that, decisions, like things that I wanted to do and I wouldn't necessarily tell my parents. But I think now, it's got to the point where, like I'm growing and I can voice what I want to do and whether I don't wanna do this and I think my parents are kinda understanding that as well. (Participant four)

Conversation Extract 6

Participant eleven: I was thinking about it for a little bit and I was like oh, so it's important that you do what you're passionate about and not what just do it, just for the sake of doing it. And I felt like, um, it's really important especially for Pacific health, cause I feel sometimes, young pacific teenagers are sort of, not usually forced into doing something, but like sort of, its like, their obliged by their parents, their sort of pushed towards doing something that might not necessarily be something they're keen on doing or what they like doing. So, yeah I just thought it was um, just to change it up a little bit, just as a, um, as a group of young people, it's, it's good to listen to your parents you know take into consideration what they have to say and stuff but at the end of the day, if you're not happy about what you're doing and you don't think you'll be happy doing it later on, I'm sure they'll be ok with you just saying, oh I don't wanna do this. Can yeah help you in the long run.

Facilitator: Did you have an opportunity to do what you're passionate about or are you following your parents dream?

Participant eleven: nah, I'm doing what I'm passionate about and it just so happens it what they want to (laughter from the group) Win-win for everybody.

Conversation extract 7

Facilitator: And so do you feel, like if you guys um, had something in mind that you wanted to you to do, and when you get to your parents, like would you guys be able to just say?

Participant seven: (shakes his head) Nah (laughs)

Participant one: yeah

Facilitator: How would you, how would you manage it?

Participant seven: uh, probably hide it (laughs)

Participant one: (whispers) back down

Participant seven: Or just yeah, back down

It is also worthy to note here, another layer of complexity that is also at play. There is a tension between these expectations and the personal value of respect. One knows to respect their elders and parents but at the same time, a deep-rooted value of respect can be another barrier to expressing an opposing opinion even if it reflects an option that would be a positive contribution to their health and wellbeing.

It's kind hard for them because it's like, it's not accepted by the older generation but like in a sense the older generation, they're like the heart of like most islands, it's the older generation cause you're always told to respect your elders and if the elders don't like it, you shouldn't do it. (Participant three)

Like at times I do disrespect my parents you know. I don't agree with their ways of teaching because it's the island way and I'm just young and like to defend myself and yeah. Um, I don't know it's cool in like how they step in and stuff and try and help out. But their way of trying to help out can be very demanding, like they want it done their way instead of trying to hear you out and show you an easier way for me, like showing my mum you know this is the way that I want to do it. (Participant six)

Potential Solutions

By the final discussion evenings, the focus of the sessions became identifying high-priority areas to work with and then to discuss potential solutions. In response to this, the group agreed that there was a need to work closely with Pacific parents. From the discussions, the group came to a consensus that these restrictions felt in the home environment and not from a traditionally cultural perspective create a point of tension that they would like to be changed.

Conversation extract 9

Participant five: I think the traditional stuff that's like probably impacting what we are talking about is like the just *do what I tell you*, oh like *what I say and like don't ask questions* like just the stuff that we've you know, talked about with like educating parents. Whereas like the other like you know the whole fa'hu and faka apa apa like that stuff it's not really big of a deal, like we just don't understand it but I don't think that's having an impact on my health and wellbeing, well...

Participant nine: community, community traditions are fine, it's just like the homely traditions.

Two members in the group spoke of programs they had seen implemented in high schools, which aimed at or included a component on educating parents on the current education system and the different opportunities available for their children.

Like people, like um there's programs where, people at university really try and work with parents and you know tell them, you know university's an option but it's there for your kids to make their own choices. You know, like when I was in high school, we had an outreach program, so that was the Victoria university and it was really just working with both PI parents and um year 13, year 12 students to really like make parents aware of university so I think that that's something that can really be done. Working with parents in a way, making them understand. (Participant four)

Conversation extract 8

Participant three: everything...I guess um, talking about this reminded me of a program we did in highschool um cause I was part of a leadership group, leadership class and it was called Pacific Pride and then every holiday we'd have a program and it was called Youth Pride and every time we do something, we'd always involved the parents because our teacher told us that this is how you're gonna explain to your parents or this is the way we explain to our parents how things at school work, how things work for us as students and like everywhere else...So it was more like most of our one's started from school. Just educating the parents from school, bringing them into like parent meetings, functions and stuff.

Facilitator: And did it work?

Participant three: it did, it worked really well cause after taking, my dad who is set in his own ways. After my dad went to that for a few times, cause we went to like set meetings and they weren't one on one parents and they were set in their own ways, and we would go like step by step how the curriculum material works at school, what's it like at school for some students at school, you know? Like don't pressure your kids, don't put too much expectations on them. They are individual people. You can't expect them to be you kind of thing. Like it kinda, it wasn't like a, they didn't change immediately, but because we started at year eleven, they gradually got used to the fact that, yeah its different. It opened their eyes a bit.

Further research into effective programmes and processes to empower Pacific parents and extended families to better understand and engage with education is important. Another suggested solution was to implement a mentoring program.

5.1.3 Having a social life

Figure 5-5: Social life is very healthy for me as a young pacific person



This section as well as the collated extracts below examines the participants' reflections on social interactions with peers in various different contexts.

Whether they were just hanging out with peers, engaging in physical activity, using social media platforms, or at school or university or expressing their opinion, doing life with other people was considered an important component to their health and wellbeing.

Went for an adventure on Sunday to victory beach! Was such an awesome place and awesome walk. Found this random tree lying on the ground so we thought it would a good idea to 'plant' it. It's important to be active... A key to good physical well-being. But at the same time, sharing memories with people you care about is something I find is really important for a good foundation of both health and well-being. (Participant four)

Sport is definitely one way of living a healthy life, you know its just because like especially in a team sport like rugby you're not only relying on yourself, you're relying on, you know, other people and the last thing you want to do is let your friends, your team mates down, you're always trying your best to be the best or the best that you can be so you know, that's why I feel like that sport is one way of living a healthy life. (Participant twelve)

I was just sitting with them and I realised like yo this is pretty cool um, you get to sort of hang out with your friends and you're sort of doing your own sort of thing and you're sort of on the same sort of path so you sort of know the same struggle so you can sort of help each other out and um yeah. And the caption is learnin (was supposed to be learning but obviously typo there) with like-minded people and just sort of just, embodies the Pacific culture and the Pacific way of life cause we're real, a collective group, you worry about other people as much as you worry about yourself if not maybe more. (Participant eleven)

I think for your own wellbeing and health you need to be surround by people who make you happy rather than people who make you angry or upset cause that doesn't help you at all in a way? Pretty self- explanatory. (Participant two)

Having friends with me is really important, they encourage me and listen to me through a lot. (Participant one)

Acceptance - having someone you care about accept your culture and kind of lifestyle that is completely different to theirs. (Participant three)

Social life as a young person is pretty important...you don't wanna just be a loner all the time. (Participant seven)

Being with others and having a sense of connectedness may again seem like a simple idea that everyone expresses differently but the importance of being social for a young person is not to be underestimated.

5.1.4 Challenges of being with people – labels

Just as with family, there are certain challenges around having and maintaining a healthy social life as a young person. They discussed the challenges of learning how to adequately respond to the developments within the technological field. Emphasis was placed on how the increased use of social media specifically is leading to a decrease of face-to-face interactions and increased opportunities to project a false image on oneself. According to the group, the social media challenges then at times also exacerbate the social pressures to fit in or to be one of the ‘cool kids’ in high school. However, when looking at these issues through a Pacific-specific lens, what was then highlighted were the different perceptions about being a young Pacific Islander and the labels they themselves use.

Stereotypes

The following quotes or extracts are responses to a question where they were asked to name different Pacific Island stereotypes: Sports people, performers and hard working factory workers.

Good at sport (Participant eight)

Like cause you know islanders work in the factories and stuff, long hours, good with their hands, you know? Hard workers. (Participant seven)

Another Pacific stereotype is that we eat a lot and if you see islanders KFC, nothing new. If anything we’ll joke and be like oh they’re gonna buy the whole menu aye? (Participant nine)

Stereotypes also included a group of people who make poor food choices or who misbehaved.

Conversation extract 10

Participant nine: I don't know, I feel like I have to behave cause then they'll be like those people who like always doing something crazy or something.

Participant one: (sarcastic tone) Bloody islanders, bloody Tongans

Conversation extract 11

Participant eight: good at music

Participant nine: Performers. Always ask the islanders to sing a song

There is nothing wrong with being a sports person, a performer or a factory worker and it is exciting to see Pacific peoples representing New Zealand in sports and performing arts. But these stereotypes reflect certain perceptions and a limited scope of expectations for Pacific peoples, for example, there was no mention of Pacific peoples within the academic fields.

Black

The stereotypes and labels that the group discussed actually leads to a deeper issue at hand. Pālagi people often have white skin and Pacific Islanders often have light brown or really dark brown skin; that is a simple fact of life. However, the participants refer to themselves as “black” which reflects the subtle undertones of racism, a reality that does exist for some New Zealanders.

I went to...a white boy school. So like I, the only Pacific people I used to hang out with was the Fijian community, so like I never had that. Like all my friends, all my good friends through out high school; even now like, they're all white. I guess...it made me the person I am now like that's why if went to a school like Kings, I'd probably be a lot different. It wasn't till I was like 15 till I hung out with PI boys; I always had white friends...Pacific Island sports didn't come till way way later (Participant twelve)

I remember year 7 and 8, there was um, rugby was the thing on the courts. It became really big thing and it was always blacks vs white no matter how many islanders (laughs) and like

I look back on it now and it was quite racist but like at the time it was like probably 4 blacks vs like 12 white kids yeah? No one questioned it type of thing, just because that's how it was. And like its weird looking back at it now thinking is that right? Is that right? (Participant nine)

Conversation extract 12

Participant eight: At (our college), there's like a black table.

Participant one: Literally black table, black tree, it's a thing. It's a thing.

Participant eight: and like um, like if you ever looking for one the pacific islanders just go there...

Participant one: just go there, black table

Participant eight: someone would be there, you know? It's just how it is.

Through these experiences, the participants also highlight how the environment one is in can perpetuate these racial differences.

5.2 Pacific culture is evolving as more islanders come over to New Zealand

The second main idea that the group articulated was that their views of health and wellbeing are tied closely with culture, but more importantly that culture in itself is dynamic and evolving. This idea was mainly described in the following three contexts:

- a. Traditional Perspectives vs New Zealand way of doing things
- b. Defining ethnic identities
- c. Ideas about their faith

Perceptions of family members being slow to adapt to be a bit more open-minded created spaces of tension for this group of Pacific youth, a challenge that itself is in the process of evolving.

5.2.1 The Island Way, the New Zealand Way or the New Zealand Pacific Way?

Both Pacific youth and their parents navigate multi-cultural spaces – that is the nature of being a Pacific Islander living in New Zealand. One can live out the Pacific lifestyle through maintaining core cultural values as discussed in the previous section (the *why* behind the action) and through the expression of certain behaviours (the action itself). It is the latter that will be discussed in this section as the Pacific values drive the expression of certain behaviours, which are dependent on the time, context and space.

Traditional Background

When referring to the Pacific culture, participants would refer to ‘traditions’. These traditional views were seen as strict and were in direct comparison to common practice in New Zealand. The females in the group best illustrated the traditional perspective and the examples they described were specifically in regards to the modest image they felt was expected of them: no piercing, no tattoos, not dying their hair, clothes that covered your knees.

As well as like when your from the island and you're coming to the city in general you have to try and like keep what's like, because I came with my family and they try to keep what's traditional. Like you're not supposed to do this, you're not supposed to do that but all around me all I could see was the things they told me I couldn't do. Like you're not allowed to get plenty of piercings, and I was like I went to school and this girl had her whole ear pierced. You're not allowed to do anything to your hair, I went to school, this girl had her hair, it was pretty much two different colours, it was like not kinda normal. So to them you have to try and keep our tradition but at the same time you have to try and fit in so in a sense its going back to living two lives like what they said. (Participant three)

Um, me and my sister. I got my lips pierced and she got her...oh she got her lip pierced too. We both got our lips pierced when we went to Tonga and then (laughs) And my parents they didn't care, they were like oh it's ok, you guys can do whatever. But like the older people and people at church were like oh my god what are they doing. Like you know they said stuff but like we were always like we don't really care. But even when I met someone from Tonga he was like oh I remember you from Tonga, you're the one, you're the girl with the lip piercing, like my nana said like what are you guys doing and I was like....ok (Participant five)

I think it's because um, when you're wearing pants, just the whole modesty thing. Especially with the, with girls, with guys it's not too much but with girls if your showing like um your legs like it's very immodest. It's just that respect thing but it's, I don't know, it's just one of those things that's been in the Samoan culture for long - it's just not questioned anymore. (Participant four)

Conversation Extract 13

Participant one: Standard set, like its doesn't look clean to other people but even though it's like something like just dying your hair, like that's not clean go back to black because that's clean. Or like piercings, or like tattoos, that's like huge like you're a girl that doesn't look clean on a girl, you shouldn't be doing that. Oh I feel like girls, no offence but we have even more pressure to be a certain...

Participant three: Look

Participant one: Standard. Yeah we have to like watch how we talk, what we do,

Participant three: how we sit

Participant five: how we sit, the length of your hair

Figure 5-6: Stepping out of my comfort zone and doing something crazy once in a while



Though this may be one category of examples, it shows the rigidity of expectations that arise from adhering to the traditional way of doing things. This was also seen in the context of “Family Rules” as previously discussed. However, what was an interesting conclusion from the group was that they believe these traditional perspectives are currently shifting:

I feel like it's different where your parents are from as well. Cause like my mum was born here and my dad was born in Samoa. And so mum's like a lot more understanding, like she's like oh no, she might have grown up like both her parents speaking full Samoan and everything but like she still grew up with people here, who were a lot different to like the islands. So like Mum is like less strict than Dad, dad's still traditional and stuff. Mum's like more chill, just depends. (Participant two)

Conversation Extract 14

Facilitator: change from tradition, so being able to um, what are your thoughts on that? This issue, you know, on traditional aspects of Pacific Culture and then emerging it here in New Zealand? Is that like a major issue? Is that a major issue that needs to be changed?

Participant twelve: it's hard

Participant one: I feel like it's already changed

Participant six: yeah

Participant nine: It's changing

Participant one: I feel like it's already adapted to

Participant six: cause I feel like In the islands everything is getting quite modernised

Participant three: yeah

Participant five: I think the traditional stuff that's like probably impacting what we are talking about is like the just do what I tell you, oh like what I say and like don't ask questions like just the stuff that we've you know, talked about with like educating parents whereas like the other like you know the whole fahu and faka'apa'apa like that stuff it's not really big of a deal, like we just don't understand it but I don't think that's having an impact on my health and wellbeing, well...

Living out the Pacific way in a different environment has in turn lead to the changing perspectives. The challenge was not so much about navigating through traditional beliefs but more about discovering their personal ethnic identity.

5.2.2 We are New Zealand born

Figure 5-7: Identity



Figure 5-8: Your identity and where you come from are very important to your wellbeing



Phiney discusses the complexity of ethnic self-identification stating “although this appears to be a simple issue, it is in fact quite complex, inasmuch as one's ethnicity, as determined by descent (parental background), may differ from how

one sees oneself ethnically (Phinney, 1990, p. 503).” The following extract reflects just that:

Conversation extract 15

Participant five: oh I think it's a bit, it's quite strange when people ask you like, where are you from and it's always like, where am I from in NZ or where am I from ethnicity wise?

Others: yeah

Participant nine: the double question like...it's like they just wanna say why you brown type of thing

Participant twelve: yeah, like, what, what are you (laughter from group)

Participant five: you're never really like, its, you never really know what they're asking

Table 5.1 – Degree of identification based on one's own ethnic group and the Majority group

		Identification with Pacific Culture	
		Strong	Weak
Identification with New Zealand Culture	Strong	1	2
	Weak	3	4

Following the above discussion, the researcher presented a two-dimensional model to the group looking at ethnic identity from an acculturation perspective (Table 4.1) and asked each member to indicate where on the table they found themselves. The myriad of responses by this group to this exercise again reflects the complexities of developing cultural identities for Pacific youth in New Zealand.

(1) Participant twelve: um, I guess I grew up with Fijian at home, with my father, that was like real strong and then don't know just primary school and that and then I don't know associated with the, with the kids at school and I play cricket in the summer, rugby and soccer in the winter, um I don't know, I just feel, just identify strongly with both but then I don't know....I just feel like I'm a typical kiwi but then I'm also a Fijian yeah.

(2) Participant eight: oh, I was 2. You don't really do many Tokelauan things at home um I wasn't really, I was going to be taught Tokelauan when I was younger but nan, for some reason chose not to teach me. And mum could have taught me, but I guess she was like busy. Not busy but like um, it was just easier to talk English and um usually only when we're with nan, that's when we do tokelauan things. Um like I'll go with nan to Wellington and stuff like that, but when it's just me and mum at home it's just you know, kiwi things, everything, so I guess more Kiwi than Tokelauan.

(3) Participant four: I guess for like me, just because I'm so immersed in my Samoan like culture, it's just me. You know, I wouldn't see myself any other way than Samoan. You know what I mean, just Samoan. So, I think that is true, it just depends on how much you engage, like I know a lot of islanders who don't engage much with their island, their kinda of culture, so they don't really, it's not that they don't identify themselves as Pacific but they just don't find it that big of a deal, if that makes sense in a way.

(4) Participant twelve: Um, probably because I well, I can't speak it. Well I can understand it but our family doesn't really do many Tongan things. Like we don't really go to a Tongan church or like we only do Tongan funerals, like we go to Tongan funerals and stuff but there's nothing really traditional that we do at home. Um yeah. So there's nothing I can really think of. We didn't have giant 21st's, um yeah, I don't know. I don't really know. Just yeah.

It seems to be that their sense of identification with the culture was directly related with their level of engagement of Pacific behaviours and not necessarily maintenance of the Pacific values. The scope of this research project was far too small to address such a topic as ethnic identity in the Pacific context and in the context of wellbeing, however, this is nonetheless an example of evolving and developing perspectives.

5.2.3 There is always a connection

Figure 5-9: Faith



Figure 5-10: Prayer and Reflection



Figure 5-11: Arise and Shine



“In the Pacific culture, you are born into a faith” and “it may not be strong but it’s always there” (participants eight and twelve respectively).

These two quotes talk to the spiritual component to the Pacific culture – faith and culture are so intertwined it is difficult to separate the two. But being born into it and then having the choice to accept it as your own is a faith journey that almost all Pacific peoples have as they grow up.

For some in the group, having a personal relationship with God was the most important life decision to make – an integral part of their identity.

Oh yeah, so, my parents ever since I was young, there was like if I was only to take one thing from them teaching me, it was like the most important thing is like faith. Like if I didn’t have anything but like the thing that they want me to have is the faith, my relationship with God, that’s the strongest thing I could ever have. Like the most important thing. Better than money, everything I have, so yeah and like as Pacific people I think it’s so important.

Christianity, religion in our culture is so like immersed with our culture so like yeah.
(Participant seven)

But yeah I think it's pretty important for me personally anyway. It gives me something to look forward to till the end of the week going to church and being able to spend that time, reflecting on the week that's been and sort of looking forward to the week that's coming ahead and gets me real grounded (Participant eleven)

Well this is just what I relate to anyways, we do everything through God and you know god willing and I think one thing that really stuck with me this other night someone said "if you have God and you lose everything, you know but you still have God, you still have everything." Does that make sense? Like you could lose your house, you could lose you know your money or whatever you still have everything through God. (Participant four)

These participants talk about benefits to their health and wellbeing when having a faith – regardless of their circumstances, they have something to hold to, something that keeps them grounded.

For others, the personal connection was not as strong:

Yeah, hm I don't know, maybe cause I didn't, I only go to church when I got back to Fiji. Um like I believe, I believe you know? In my faith but I kind of, no in the whole maybe, the whole kinda spectrum of it. Maybe like, I never went to, yeah I never went to church when I was kid, ah, I only when to church just when I was at school. There was nothing that I really grew up with, but I knew it was important like going back to Fiji and that, but then Dad, dad never really bothered or mum to you know, for that to be a strong connection, to be stronger, to be a strong thing in my life so yeah. But I just know, yeah like I do have a wee bit of faith but it's just maybe not as strong as these guys (Participant twelve)

I have faith it's just not as strong because we're always bouncing off two. And they're like completely two different ones. They have their own little different slight beliefs which was kinda hard to grasp when your older siblings like the ones who got baptized into the first church would be like this is the way that it goes here. I was baptized into the second one and I'm used to growing up in that one and it's always been compared. Yeah, my little religion family is like complicated. So I'm, um I don't have that strong relation to faith when I'm constantly bouncing off two. Yeah. (Participant three)

Even though their personal connection to a faith was not as strong as other members in the group because of their home environment, they still claimed to have faith.

For others, questioning certain behaviours led to the decision to not accept it for themselves. Participants place variously on the spectrum of those believing in God, those who have decided differently, and those currently making that choice. This again reflects how culture is dynamic and evolves over time.

Uh, I was brought up Catholic and my family's like majorly catholic but I don't go to church, I don't really go to church unless I go home and then I just got to church with my family. But I think it's more of like a, I don't think it's really a culture thing, more really a personal thing like. Um, like as I got older, I started to question, I don't know if it's just Catholicism maybe like some of the things that they think its kinda like, just like, um, I don't know like why? Like that doesn't sound like right, like I still have the beliefs, like you know be a good person like the foundations of like being you know a Christian but um I think maybe just the religion part, still coming to grips with it but...my nana is always like, 'Go to church' and I'm like 'yes' and she's like 'don't say yes cause I know you're not going. (laughter from group) and I'm like 'ok'. (Participant five)

One additional point that is interesting to note here is that in these discussions about faith and spirituality, it was in the context of Christianity and not with an indigenous view, nor did they talk about a spiritual connection with the land. This again reflects changing perspectives over time.

Whether or not to express a faith of their own is an entirely independent choice, just like other behaviours that are linked to the Pacific culture. This journey of defining their own identity can contribute to a positive sense of health and wellbeing. However, faith and spirituality have consistently been positively correlated with good health and wellbeing (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988; Eckersley, 2007; Koenig, 2009). As faith and spirituality are closely related to the Pacific culture as depicted in the Pacific models of health, looking at what factors cause Pacific young peoples to distance themselves from this aspect of the Pacific culture warrants further attention.

In a more general sense, identifying behaviours our Pacific peers choose to retain, change or forget, are important components to the health and wellbeing of a Pacific peoples moving forward.

5.3 Food and alcohol – finding a balance

The final theme that was prominent in each discussion evening was their attitudes and behaviours around food and alcohol. Each member knew the facts about, and the direct benefits of eating the right foods for their physical and mental health – one member even referred to eating fruit and drinking water as “basic wellbeing”. These are well known effects of healthy eating, however, the reality for this group of young Pacific peoples was not in line with healthy habits. Such healthy eating habits were identified as difficult to attain due to multiple social and cultural components.

Challenges to healthy habits

One challenge was around the costs of eating healthy either for themselves as individual students or in their family context: their socioeconomic background dictated how much it affected them. There was no unanimous thought on this challenge as this group reflected different backgrounds, hence the mixed response.

Figure 5-12: What's Cheaper matters



Figure 5-13: Healthy Options = Healthy Choices



Furthermore, with regards to healthy options, the easy access and prominence of fizzy drinks and fast food takeaways was a challenge this group faced.

Another challenge to making good choices is stress – as young people in high school or university the exam period can be quite stressful and balance becomes difficult, so convenience and comfort during such times dictate choices.

Like after you know the Thursday trainer, Thursday training, finishing at like what? Quarter to 8, 8 o'clock, I mean like, do you really wanna go home and cook? You know? After you know, an hour and half training? Especially, you know, if your studying, studying late, I mean do you wanna cook yourself a meal you could go get yourself a pie and go back and keep going, you know? It's no hassle, no mess, no clean up, just money from the pocket, that's all. (Participant twelve)

Like cake, and junk and just, pretty much just pile on something that is unhealthy and that like to me, it made me feel, it kinda made me feel real good afterwards because I was happy. I've had some junk food. I've had a bit of alcohol and I'm happy but if you're like, if you're stressing out kinda thing, lets be honest, the first thing on your mind is not healthy food. You don't wanna go and sit down and have salad – cause that's not what's on my mind (approving sounds from others). (Participant three)

Another factor was the social environments – one member talked about how her family ate for the purpose of being full and others mentioned the need to have food at Pacific functions, no food meant there would be no function. This conversation then lead to how food links young people together as a social activity. Furthermore, for the university students, drinking alcohol and eating together (“getting a feed”) were almost default social activities.

If you go to volley, there's every Monday, Wednesday, Friday and even it's kind of a way to de-stress, even if you go there and you're by yourself, you know you'll see someone that you know because you're going to see the Islanders. You know? And you know that Monday, Wednesday, Friday, someone's gonna be there. So it's a good way to de-stress I guess, but even then like I feel like if you meet up on a Friday, they'll be like where you guys drinking tonight? It always, somehow it always leads to a drink up. (Participant four)

Conversation Extract 16

Participant five: I feel like it might also be like a, to tie in the de-stressing thing, like I don't know if Islanders really have another way in which they can de-stress and chill out without drinking or eating together like it's a, it's a group thing that's done. Like I don't really, really like

Participant nine: I think like with food, everyone can eat type of thing. So like everyone feels included when you eat. And like I think it's more like not being left out of the group, so if someone says oh should we go get a feed, you'd be like 'oh I'm already full'...But you just go anyway, cause you don't wanna be by yourself and then like once you're there, you're like oh maybe I could have a burger or something like that. But even if you're already full, you just don't wanna be left behind, without the group.

The group also acknowledged that Pacific students at Otago University have poor drinking habits that reflect the current health statistics – the idea of drinking till you fall down seemed to be quite dominant.

I know when Islanders get together to drink, they're more than happy to just share. Like they're not stingy with their alcohol. Like I've been to both sides, and like every time I go to like the bros flat, oh here bro I've got a 24 pack we can all drink it. (yeah you put it all on one table.) It amounts to one giant pile of alcohol...with Islanders its like, oh yeah my box done he'll let me drink his, he can drink mine, whatever and you all get real wasted. (Participant nine)

Conversation Extract 17

Participant four: oh, I don't know, cause I really don't know much palagis but I don't know how they party, but when islanders party they drink until they can't drink anymore.

Participant five: Yeah they drink till the morning and they continue till the next day and your like what?

Participant four: They're still going and going and going. And like maybe when palagis get drunk they get more rowdy than Islanders do but just what I've seen anyways. Like it might be, I mean palagis still get rowdy like but just the way that pacific islanders drink, they would be like I know so many pacific islander young people who drink everyday just because they wanna drink you know? And it's bad for them, you just know that's bad for them but they just drink because, they're verging on alcoholic, which is really bad. But yeah, it's just.

Moreover, the group also addressed their drinking habits in high school, which was of course, always hidden from their parents. What was brought to light here was the use of kava by underage Pacific drinkers and the social pressures this younger group faced with drinking. What wasn't made clear was whether or not the parents of minors drinking cava were aware of this practice.

Um with the boys at our school, they just go kava all the time but like they do it to like...but like they do instead of like drinking alcohol. Cause you know they are all under age.
(Participant seven)

My uncle came from the islands, he's like how old are you? And I was like I'm 15, and he was like 'why aren't you drinking?' and I was like oh? (laughter from group) this is Dunedin but in the islands, everyone drink. If I drink, you drink. But I still wasn't allowed. (Participant one)

Nah I think um, just I think a lot of people at high school think just by drinking you become cool. You, you, like, the cool group drinks. The cool group has parties but like I guess sometimes Islanders maybe wanna be in that group but maybe sometimes you just think, it's really, you know, not that cool. (Participant eight).

Their attitudes and behaviours towards food and alcohol was considered a core category for good health and wellbeing for this group. The goal of finding balance is key, yet very difficult to attain. How we can make it easier for Pacific youth to overcome such complex challenges is important moving forward.

6 Discussion

This research project aimed to capture the views of Pacific youth in Dunedin regarding their health and wellbeing. In doing so, specific challenges and potential solutions were also discussed. While the discussions affirmed key elements of current Pacific health models, they also highlighted areas where extensions and adaptations may be required in order for these models to better reflect the Pacific youth perspective.

6.1 Being social

6.1.1 Family

Although there was a lot of variation in the family structure and organization of the representatives in this group of Pacific youth, the central theme of family as a double-edged sword was a group consensus. They felt that family was their base-support, but they all shared experiences of cross cultural and trans-generational tensions, as well as the burden of high family expectations. These themes have also been highlighted in previous studies (Chun, 2000; Edwards et al., 2003).

An additional finding from this study was that strict and unidirectional communication patterns within the family unit were, at times, more challenging than that of cross-cultural expectations. This finding could be due to the heterogeneity of this group compared to other studies. The current study did not assess if the participants were first, second, third or even fourth generation New Zealand born, nor did it differentiate between the varying Pacific heritages represented (i.e. Pacific / non Pacific parent, two Pacific parents of different ethnicities, one Pacific ethnic background). Moreover, the emphasis on cross-cultural issues as opposed to family dynamics mentioned by other studies is most likely due to the narrower scope of their research question that centred on bi-cultural identity (Keddell, 2006). However, the inability for this Pacific youth group to openly discuss matters with their parents was an issue complicated by cultural aspects such as the collective background, deeply ingrained sense of

respect, the culture in which their parents' grew up in and in one case, the language barrier as she could not fluently speak Samoan.

The findings from the current study validate the work of Fa'alau (2016) in the context of communication. They identified three distinct communication patterns in Samoan families in New Zealand, one of which is restrictive in nature and has a negative effect on one's wellbeing. Thus, as the focus group highlighted the latter as a particular challenge, which should be a high priority focus point, this warrants further attention. The group expressed the need to work with families and to empower parents.

Thus in light of third study aim, one line of possible inquiry could be to tap into their understanding and knowledge of their family's history. Duke and colleagues (2008) posit that knowledge of family history is positively correlated with higher levels of wellbeing but also, that it is a marker, which is part of a complex ongoing process:

"Learning about one's family is part of a large and complex ongoing process of family narrative co-construction, we do not propose that knowledge of family history, per se, renders people stronger and more resilient. Rather, knowledge of family history seems to have potential as a marker—an index—that reflects that ongoing complex process. Other components of the process that might similarly serve as markers might be a family's level of intergenerational communication, family cohesiveness, the presence of intrafamilial support systems, high levels of narrative co-construction and presence of rituals that maintain continuity despite inevitable ups and downs that occur in all people's lives (Duke et al., 2008, p. 3)."

The positive effect of talking about one's family history has also been noted in a New Zealand study with Pacific peoples (Taumoepeau et al., 2015). Building on this finding to include the related components discussed by Duke and colleagues above, could be one of several solutions to improving the sense of wellbeing in Pacific youth.

6.1.2 Social Lives

This group also highlighted the value of gaining a sense of belonging to a group as well as the importance of developing and maintaining relationships for their wellbeing. This is congruent with other quantitative studies that have shown a positive correlation between social connectedness and wellbeing in youth (Gillison, Standage, & Skevington, 2008; Jose, Ryan, & Pryor, 2012). Additionally, Suh & Colleagues (2008) noted that one's social life was more predictive of life satisfaction in a collectivistic culture. Together, these findings highlight the need for an updated version of Pacific health and wellbeing belief models for young peoples that specifically identify a social component. The Uputāua Therapeutic Approach model was the only model that acknowledged this, as the social wellbeing component was represented by the frontal left post. Seiuli's interpretation of this factor explores how the life of a Samoan person identifies as a member of the social collective and how social support can have a positive affect on one's wellbeing. However, a further addition to this social aspect, which, Seiuli's framework does not consider, is the social media space.

This group talked to the influence of social media – they mentioned how it could be used to maintain friendships but were concerned about the decreasing face-to-face interactions and the increasing ability to project a false image online. This caution around social media use is warranted as research has shown that the use of networking platforms had a two-fold effect on the wellbeing of young peoples with increased life satisfaction only being correlated with positive interactions online but decreased life satisfaction with negative interactions (Van den Eijnden, Meerkerk, Vermulst, Spijkerman, & Engels, 2008). Furthermore, other research showed that although participants reported lower levels of loneliness six months down the track, they also noted higher rates of depression (Helsen, Vollebergh, & Meeus, 2000). The presence of technology is a reality in our communities and these studies reveal that the social media spaces can at times help young peoples to foster positive relationships, thus it is a factor that we cannot disregard.

Furthermore for this particular group, peers were identified as a source of support that they could easily confide in when they did not feel supported by their family members – a finding consistent with another qualitative study that included a cohort of Samoan youth from Counties Manukau (Edwards et al., 2003). However, other quantitative studies with Pacific participants have noted that the impact of family support is a greater predictor to wellbeing (Chu, Saucier, & Hafner, 2010; Dew & Huebner, 1994; Greenberg et al., 1983; Helsen et al., 2000; Raja, McGee, & Stanton, 1992). In terms of designing interventions for Pacific youth aimed at increasing their sense of wellbeing, this finding reinforces the need to work primarily with families but also working with their peers as support. A similar line of inquiry would be to take inspiration from peer mentoring programmes, which have been shown to be effective, especially within the academic context (Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999; Collings, Swanson, & Watkins, 2014).

6.1.3 Labels and stereotypes

The point of discussion regarding stereotypes and labels as a challenge to the wellbeing of a Pacific young person should be acknowledged. Harris et al. (2006) analysed the effects of racial discrimination on health and noted positive correlation between racial discrimination and poor health outcomes. Other studies with young peoples have also highlighted Pacific stereotypes and the lack of positive Pacific role models in diverse spheres of influence (George & Rodriguez, 2009; Webber, 2013).

Some scholars have investigated whether or not ethnic identity is a potential buffer to the negative effects of racial discrimination, however, results from such studies are inconsistent (Outten, Schmitt, Garcia, & Branscombe, 2009; Yoo & Lee, 2005).

Webber (2013) studied the influence of racial-ethnic identity in a cohort of young European, Chinese and Samoan participants living in New Zealand. She argued that dealing with stereotypes and potential situations of racism will be an

inevitable challenge for adolescents in multi-ethnic high schools and that these experiences are somewhat crucial to one developing a healthy sense of racial-ethnic identity. However, that argument is contested when one considers the negative impacts racial discrimination can have on one's health.

The Pacific community in Dunedin can be considered as a minority community when one takes into account that 7% of the total Pacific community in New Zealand live across the whole of the south island; thus from the perspective of promoting wellbeing, identifying any potential issues around marginalisation should be considered.

6.2 Evolving cultures and identities

The scope of this project included capturing how Pacific youth defined health and wellbeing and the results showed that their culture and ethnic identity contributed to shaping their definitions. However, the participants sat on a spectrum from feeling “not that Tongan or Samoan” etc. to “I am completely immersed in my Pacific culture.” Their different levels of perceived acculturation could be explained as a function of their age. A recent meta-analysis in America showed that age was a moderating variable in the association between ethnic identity and the wellbeing of people of colour – they found that those with low levels of acculturation in turn showed lower levels of ethnic identity (Smith & Silva, 2011). Tupola (2004b), Keddell (2006) and other researchers have also talked about identity fluidity in young people, which is a normal process to go through during adolescence.

Understanding their parents' experiences could provide further insight on this finding as their choice on whether or not to pursue cultural integrity influenced participants' level of acculturation. Referring back to Lamy's (2013) work on ethno-cultural continuity, what then are the reasons as to why some parents were motivated to attain this group-orientated goal compared to why others chose the opposite? One can simply speculate, as the parents' experiences were not explored in the current study but this area warrants further investigation.

Although one should acknowledge the spectrum of perceived acculturation, research suggests that it would be highly beneficial to encourage Pacific youth to engage in both the New Zealand and Pacific cultures. If we refer back to the analyses that prompted the current study, the perceptions of higher societal wellbeing was the only factor associated with both lower levels of cholesterol and low density lipoproteins (Moors, 2015). Manuela and Sibley described this factor as one that measures how satisfied a Pacific person feels supported within the New Zealand society; the higher one measured on this scale, the more one engaged with the New Zealand culture. Additionally, in a large cohort with immigrant youth representing 26 different cultural backgrounds residing in 13 different countries, Berry et al. noted that youth who developed an integration profile had also developed better sociocultural and psychological outcomes.

Spirituality was discussed in the context of Christianity; they held beliefs and associated their faith with going to church. It was interesting to note that there was no mention of distinct spiritual beliefs from indigenous roots. Christianity has long been established in the Pacific so this could be a reflection of this history.

6.3 Attitudes around food and alcohol

The numerous emotional, cultural and social environments that encourage habits contributing to obesity or binge drinking depicted the growing obesogenic environment. The challenges described by this group may not be generalizable to other population groups however the current health disparities mean that the Pacific youth are more disadvantaged. The premise of this study was not to solve this particular problem directly, but to identify a different way to address through identifying factors that can enhance the wellbeing of a Pacific person.

6.4 A Model of Health and Wellbeing for Pacific Youth

The identified building blocks of health and wellbeing from a Pacific perspective were family, culture, spirituality, mental wellbeing, physical wellbeing and the environment. The results of the study concur with the conclusion that current models of Pacific health do not adequately capture the views of Pacific youth. Using the metaphor of a frangipani plant, I propose a starting point for a model that represents this perspective.

The concept of health and wellbeing can be likened to that of a plant. A plant is a living organism that is continually growing which reflects the dynamic nature of this concept. Moreover, the frangipani plant was brought over to New Zealand from the Islands of the Pacific, which symbolises the migration pattern of Pacific peoples.

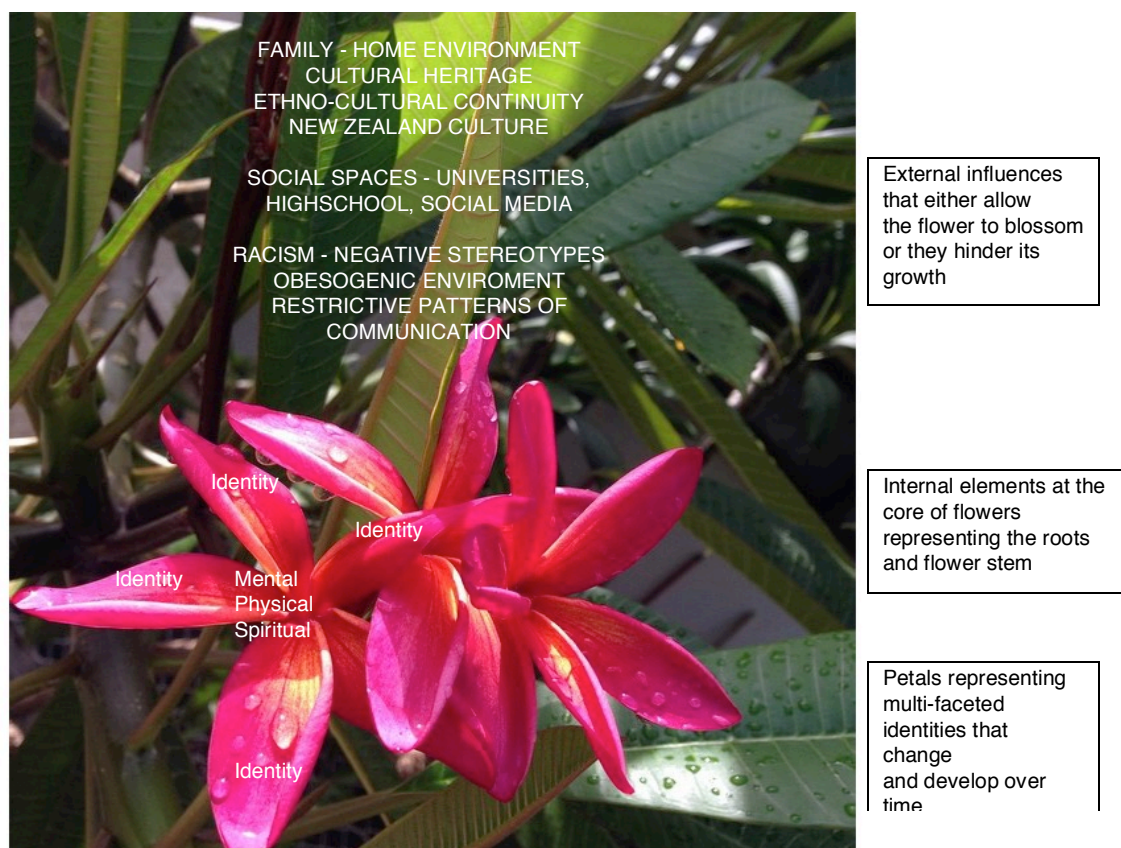
At all stages, the environment, such as the soil, watering conditions and the presence of weeds dictate how well a plant will grow. The better the environment, the stronger the plant will be; a lack of appropriate conditions will cause the plant can begin to wither and weaken. In much the same way, for Pacific youth, there are external factors that have a very important influence on one's health and wellbeing. These factors include their family / home environments, cultural heritage and their parents/their personal motivation for ethno-cultural continuity, the New Zealand context and their social spaces (school, university, social media, other). When one has more resources than challenges within these factors, one can develop a more secure picture of health and wellbeing. If one has more challenges than resources, then their health and wellbeing is in jeopardy. Specific 'weeds' that could negatively impact the health and wellbeing of a Pacific person include restrictive communication patterns and parenting styles at home, negative Pacific stereotypes and living in an obesogenic environment.

As a seed begins to grow, the germination stage is when the stem begins with grow up, while and roots push down into the soil. The stem and the roots of a

plant represent core internal elements of a Pacific young person – that is their mental and physical wellbeing. Depending on their home environment, this may or may not include spiritual wellbeing. There are certain genetic predispositions to acknowledge, however the more resources one can gain from their external environment, the stronger their overall picture of health and wellbeing will be. During the growth phase, the leaves and flowers develop. These elements represent the multi-faceted identities of a person as they change and develop over time and through different seasons; it is important to note here that their ethnic identity is only one facet of an overall picture. They also represent one's overall sense of wellbeing: just like how a thriving plant is visually noticeable, so too is a person who has optimal levels of health and wellbeing.

This is a metaphorical representation with the purpose of representing the contributing elements to the wellbeing of Pacific youth; a starting point to be further discussed and refined.

Figure 6-1: The Frangipani Model



7 Conclusions

Health and wellbeing from a Pacific youth perspective is dynamic and evolving, thus extending and updating previous models to adequately capture the youth perspective is imperative. The suggested framework reflects the views of those involved in the focus group but serves as a starting point for future models. There are a number of conclusions/implications for future practice from the current study. It should be noted that they are not prioritised.

1. There is a need for more evidence-based research that is Pacific ethnic specific. Currently the Pacific literature is heavily weighted with studies inclusive of Samoan participants. Moreover, more studies with a longitudinal design are also needed.
2. When working with Pacific youth, education providers are key stakeholders – the social environments in throughout the education system has a large influence on the health and wellbeing of our young peoples.
3. The youth expressed the importance of involving families in innovative intervention programs aimed to increase ones sense of wellbeing. An awareness of understanding that families can have open lines of communication that does not question the value of respect could be considered as an example.
4. Acknowledging varying degrees of cultural fluency of Pacific youth in Dunedin is important. It would be beneficial to provide safe spaces for individuals to engage and to learn about their Pacific heritage.
5. Pacific youth in Dunedin should be encouraged to engage with both Pacific and New Zealand cultures – as a minority ethnic group in the South Island, integrative acculturation strategies provide the most benefit to their sense of wellbeing.
6. It is imperative that our attitudes to food and alcohol are discussed and reviewed. This is an area of contention in our young Pacific peoples and raising awareness of current habits and trends is a starting point towards potential preventative changes lead by our communities.

7. The Frangipani plant model is a proposed starting point for a health and wellbeing framework that acknowledges the perspectives of our young Pacific peoples. Much like the views discussed in this study, this is a starting point that can be further adapted to better capture their current perspectives.

Addressing the health and wellbeing of Pacific youth will contribute to decreasing the current health disparities in New Zealand. This demographic has a unique perspective and a positive attitude to change with, two factors that will enable them to find solutions to over their current challenges.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix A



14th March 2016

Dear [Principal's name]

The University of Otago, in partnership with the Pacific Trust Otago, have been working together on a project that examines Pacific high school students' perceptions of their health and wellbeing. Findings from this project so far reveal that a higher sense of wellbeing is associated with lower levels of cholesterol.

The aim of this current study is to further this information by gathering qualitative data collected from a leadership group of Pacific high school students who are interested in being involved. The reason for doing this study is to eventually enable the community to develop interventions for young Pacific teenagers that are relevant to their lives. It is also envisaged that these interventions will reduce physical markers of poor health such as high levels of cholesterol by increasing their sense of wellbeing.

This study will form two leadership groups of representatives from different Pacific ethnicities aged 15 – 18 and 18 - 25. They will then participate in a photo-voice project in which they take photos of their environment over a period of two weeks. Following this, the students will engage in 5 discussion evenings, in which they critically discuss their photos in the context of health and wellbeing. These sessions will be facilitated by Hilla Fukofuka who is undertaking a BMedSci(hons) degree. The discussion sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed after which themes will be extracted from the discussion.

We are recruiting a Pacific high school students to be involved in the leadership group aged 15 – 18. We would like to work with your school to drive this recruitment phase as we believe that this study will lead to enhanced engagement in action, improved understanding of specific needs and strengths of Pacific young people as well as increased individual empowerment. Additionally, a more direct outcome of this study will be to a series of recommendations on best practice, methodology and appropriate measures for conducting the intervention phase of this project.

For more information about this project, please contact Hilla Fukofuka or her supervisor Dr Mele Taumoepeau.

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8.2 Appendix B



14th March 2016

Dear [Community Leader]

The University of Otago, in partnership with the Pacific Trust Otago, has been working together on a project that examines Pacific youths' perceptions of their health and wellbeing. Findings from this project so far reveal that a higher sense of wellbeing is associated with better physical health.

The aim of this current study is to understand Pacific youths' views of health and wellbeing. The reason for doing this study is to eventually enable the community to develop interventions for young Pacific people that are relevant to their lives. It is also envisaged that these interventions will reduce physical markers of poor health such as high levels of cholesterol by increasing their sense of wellbeing.

This study will form two leadership groups of representatives from different Pacific ethnicities aged 15 – 18 and 18 - 25. They will then participate in a photo-voice project in which they take photos of their environment over a period of two weeks. Following this, the young people will engage in 5 discussion evenings, in which they critically discuss their photos in the context of health and wellbeing. These sessions will be facilitated by Hilla Fukofuka who is undertaking a BMedSci(hons) degree. The discussion sessions will be audio-recorded and transcribed after which themes will be extracted from the discussion.

We are recruiting Pacific high school students to be involved in the leadership group aged 15 – 18 as well as youths aged 18 – 25. We would like to work with your community to drive this recruitment phase as we believe that this study will lead to enhanced engagement in action, improved understanding of specific needs and strengths of Pacific young people as well as increased individual empowerment. Additionally, a more direct outcome of this study will be to provide a series of recommendations on best practice, methodology and appropriate measures for conducting the intervention phase of this project.

For more information about this project, please contact Hilla Fukofuka or her supervisor Dr Mele Taumoepeau from the University of Otago; Finau Taungapeau (0272559908) or Eric Nabalagi (0220104926) from Pacific Trust Otago.

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8.3 Appendix C

Pacific young people's views on health and wellbeing



INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the Aim of the Project?

The aim of this project is to understand Pacific teenagers' views of their health and wellbeing. To achieve this, this project will use a photovoice technique to promote critical discussion about the health and wellbeing needs of Pacific teenagers living in Dunedin

Do I have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary. We would like for you to consent to participate in this research, as we believe that you can make an important contribution. If you do not wish to participate, just say so and we will go no further. If you choose not to take part there would be no disadvantage for you.

What will Participants be asked to do?

If you agree to be part of this project you will be asked to take pictures of images that are meaningful to you in terms of your health and wellbeing. You will also be asked to attend two training sessions to learn how to conduct the study and 5 group discussion sessions with other young people who have agreed to participate in the study. The group will comprise no more than 10 other participants. At these discussion sessions you be asked to select 2-3 pictures to comment on and discuss with the other participants. You will also be asked to express your views on how health and wellbeing can be improved. These meetings should take no more than 2 hours and refreshments will be provided at the end. The duration of the study is 7 weeks. At the end of each meeting you will also receive a phone voucher.

What Data or Information will be Collected and What Use will be made of it?

The group discussions will be audio-taped and transcribed to provide an accurate record of each participants' opinions and views. These transcripts will then be analysed for themes regarding key health and wellbeing issues for young Pacific people.

A copy of the photos you take will be provided for you and a copy also stored by the principal researcher. The information collected will be safely stored in such a way that only those mentioned below, and technical staff in their laboratories, will be able to gain access to it. Information obtained as a result of the research will be kept for at least 5 years in secure storage. Any personal information held on you such as contact details, and the audio information obtained from the group discussion may be destroyed at the end of the research even though the results from the research will, in most cases, be kept for much longer or possibly indefinitely.

What about confidentiality?

All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Any identifying information in the transcripts will be removed and your contact details and photos will be kept separately from the transcripts. While all participants in the group discussion sessions will be asked to keep what is said private, we cannot guarantee that others in the group will not share what is said.

The results of this project will be published. Your information will be analysed with the entire group and you will not be identified. You will be provided with a summary of the information analysed during the group discussions. This summary will be about the group as a whole and not about you as an individual. The photos from the project may be released as part of an exhibition but you will be asked permission for this to happen. Your decision to release your photographs is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequence.

Can participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind, just contact any of the researchers listed below.

What if Participants have any Questions?

Hilla Fukofuka

BMedSci(hons) student
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Email:

fukhi559@student.otago.ac.nz

Mr Lester Dean

Manager of Pacific Trust
Otago
Tel: 03 455 1722

Email: manager@pto.nz

Dr Mele Taumoepeau

Department of Psychology
Tel: 03 4794029

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mele@psy.otago.ac.nz

8.4 Appendix D

Pacific youth health and wellbeing photovoice study



CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANT'S PARENT

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me;
2. My child's participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
3. My child is free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
4. My child will remain anonymous in any presentations and publications;
5. I understand that my child will be audio-taped during a group discussion;
6. Personal identifying information will be destroyed at the completion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend on will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
7. My child will receive a \$20 gift voucher after each discussion evening, as a token of the researchers' appreciation for participating in this project.

I agree to take part in this project.

Parent of Participant signature..... Date:

Child's name:

Pacific youth health and wellbeing photovoice study

In my opinion the parent of the participant has given willing and informed consent.

Investigator's

signature.....

Date:

This project has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (ref 16/037). If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph. 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

8.5 Appendix E

Pacific Youth Health & Wellbeing Photovoice Study



CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:-

1. I have read the Information Sheet for this study and have had details of the study explained to me;
2. My participation in the project is entirely voluntary;
3. I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without any disadvantage;
4. I as the participant will remain anonymous in any presentations and publications;
5. I understand that I will be audio-taped during a group discussion;
6. Personal identifying information will be destroyed at the completion of the project but any raw data on which the results of the project depend on will be retained in secure storage for at least five years;
7. I will receive at \$20 gift voucher after every discussion evening attended, as a token of the researchers' appreciation for participating in this project.

I agree to take part in this project.

Participant signature..... Date:

In my opinion the participant has given willing and informed consent.

Investigator's signature.....

Date:

(NAME AND ROLE IN BLOCK CAPITALS).....

Pacific Youth Health & Wellbeing Photovoice Study

This project has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (ref 16/037). If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the human Ethics Committee Administrator (ph. 03 479 8256). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

8.6 Appendix F



Photograph release form: Pacific Youth Health and Wellbeing Photovoice Study

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. The photographs that my child has taken may be used in a public forum or published.
2. My child will not be identified as the author of the photographs.
3. I am free to withdraw my permission at any time.

I grant permission for the **Pacific Youth Health and Wellbeing Photovoice study** to use my child's photographs in a public forum

Signed:

NAME IN BLOCK CAPITALS:

Date:

8.7 Appendix G



Photograph release form: Pacific Youth Health and Wellbeing Photovoice Study

I have read the Information Sheet concerning this project and understand what it is about. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.

I know that:

1. The photographs that I have taken may be used in a public forum or published.
2. I will not be identified as the author of the photographs.
3. I am free to withdraw my permission at any time.

I grant permission for the **Pacific Youth Health and Wellbeing Photovoice study** to use my photographs in a public forum

Signed:

NAME IN BLOCK CAPITALS:

Date:

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